

THE
CHRONICLE
AND INSTITVTION
OF THE ORDER OF THE
SERAPHICALL FATHER
S. FRANCIS.

CONTEYNING
His life, his death, and his miracles, and of all his
holie disciples and companions.

SET FOORTH
*First in the Portugall, next in the Spanish, then in the
Italian, lastlie in the French, and now in the
English tongue.*

THE FIRST TOME.



AT S. OMERS,
By IOHN HEIGHAM, Anno 1613.

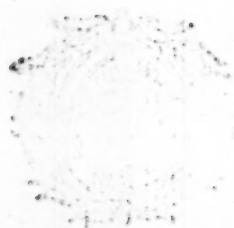
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TO THE MOST RELIGIOUS

- ENSIGNE-BEARERS OF S. CLARE;
THE ENGLISHE POORE CLARES IN
GRAVELINGE, THE AVTHOR WISHETH
VICTORIOUS TRIUMPH.



Naturalists amongst other elaborate curiosities of nature not vnworthy moralyzinge reporte of the Salamander, that contrarie to the inclination of other beastes her life is cherished by the fier, which by reason of its furiously violence to others is tearmed *Elementum implacabile*, an element with all most impossibilitie to be asswaged: whence may be plaussably verified the Phisicians proverbe that. The same drugge cures & kills, vnderstandinge accordinge to the diuersity of the patients maladie. Noe maruell then most, Reuerend mother, and Religiously deuoted Sisters, if I after my long experience of your almost Salamander like life, by dedicatinge this booke to your Religious vewe, should ad fresh coles to kindle or rather cherish your long since kindled fier of Deuotion (wherin you liue contrarie to those in the world of your Sects.) And noe meruell if therin I should giue you a receipte composed of diuers poysons (for soe they are to Heresie) since I see they are peculiar restoratiues and infallable Antidotes to your sores, for what sooner cures a longing, then to satisfy the appetite with the thing lodged for? which earnest desire or longinge it pleased you (Right worthy Religious) to manifest by your zealous importuninge me to preuayle with a third, that could and would vndertake the Translation of this worke fro French wherin it was impressed to our vulgar tounge, for your more facile and pleasant reading of the liues of so famous worthies who are indeed as exemplars, or soe manie platformes for direction of your allreadie initiated iourney. Which being with much difficultie obteyned, & after longe expectation finished by the greate paynes of an extraordinary deuote of your order, and particularly of your couent, whose will it also is that by reason you were only in cause of the Translation, & through your entreatie only it was provided for in the impressiō, that the whole volume of his labors should be shadowed vnder your matronadge. I haue not therfore enforced you to foster a straunge feture, but come to which

your selues are mothers, neyther haue I donne it making myne owne head my counsell howle, but with aduise of the Authore and other benefactours of the worke, since therfore yee haue daigned to begett it, be contented to conserue it against what difficulties the world shall oppugne it. Yee haue for your encouragment heerein infallably assurance of infinitely redoubled merit For as casuists hould, whatsoeuer is produced to publike vse, by how much it is a cause of further good or hurte to the imbracer of it, in equall measure is the increate of merite or demerite to the Setter forth, and therfore it is thought of Caluin (whom our countrey rules) that accidentally, by how much his heretie increaseth, his toiments encrease; yee therfore on the contrarie, eyther respectinge your owne merite by being more then semie authors, and patronelles of a worcke of soe greate expectance, or els meerely *ex amore amicitia*, as Phylosophers tea me it, reflecting one the good of others for *Non nobis nati sumus*, wee are not borne to our selues, yee haue reason to accept it vnder your shelter: To this end yee haue an Anthem in the office of our holie Father S. Francis instituted by reason of a diuine oracle, wherein it was reuealed to him, that hee should not only be sollicitous for himselfe, but studdie the good of others; S. Paule witnesseth of him selfe that he could be contented to loofe heauen that he might win it for others; heere is a miraculous charitie, yet ye are not driuen to that extreamity, but by being a meanes of others aniuall into heauen, ye encrease your owne ioyes. Agayne; neyther lett the title of patronelles deterr you, as if it sauoured of the world which ye haue abrenunciated, or as if it did not correspond with your Religious simplicitie which ye haue embraced; for the great affinitie of the worke with your truly simple dispositions, of it selfe did challenge you; For if eyther you respect the subiecte, it is a Chronicle of SS. wherein nothinge can be expected but meere simplicities; Agayne it is of S. Francis SS. who was a mirrour of simplicitie; if you respect the method in the handlinge tis fitted to the matter, as your selues will soone experience: Your office therefore in matronizinge, is but with your wonted simplicitie to offer the translatours labours to god almightie for successe: Wherein I would entreate you to offer vpp mee as your deuoted seruāt,

CL. A. F. R. A.

TO



TO THE READER.



THE multitude of bookes which now adayes are printed with purity and elegancie of tongues and languages, are so abundant, that it causeth many to reiect the reading of such as they ought to haue alwayes in hand for edification and profit of their soules, and not for curiositie, in regard that though al good and true doctrine, ought to be highly esteemed as the nourishment of the soule (the foode wherof is, the intellectuall vnderstanding of the truth:) yet ought the discret and Christian Reader to consider how different is the fruit collected of one booke, before another, that with the greater profit he may dispose of his houres, and keep his cogitations employed, and that as bookes encrease, so may augment in him discretion and iudgement of reading them: that so he may of each of them gather some fruit. And certainly I admire that, sith when we see auenimous beast we are terrified and tremble, for feare of his poyson: how we are so senceles, as with delight to read heretical or dissolute bookes, considering that they corrupt good manners, and induce to vices and vanities: which are also most subtill venime, wherto making the least approach, it taketh such roote in vs, and doth after-

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ward so budde forth, that empysoning our soules, it becometh incurable. And which is yett worse, we permit our selues easily to be infected, because the scope and discourse of such bookes are pleasing vnto vs, as being conformable to our appetite and to our lasciuious inclinatio: and thus according to the custome, presenting poyson vnder a sweet or alluring bayte. And therefore if the studious and carefull Christian, desire to obserue any due course in his reading, sith it so much importeth him, lett him vnderstand, that next to the doctrine of faith, and the counsels of holy scripture, no other can euer so much aduance him to purchase vertues, and hate vices, as the frequent and ordinary reading of the conuersation and life of the holy seruantes of almightie God, considering with all that is a natural thing, that to attempt a difficult and dangerous enterprise, we are therein much more induced by example then by any perswasions of whom soeuer: though we acknowledg them to be certainlie true. None could be found that would resolue ioyfully to embrace the vertue of pouerty, humility, chastity, fasting, and other penitentiall labours, if he knew not that others, not only with wordes exteriorly, but really with workes haue embraced the same: Neither was it for any other cause, that our Lord I E S V S Christ would personally come into this world, but by example to shew vs the way of our saluation, and his holy wil, because the examples & aduertissements of his faithfull seruantes, would not suffice to retire vs from our euill conuersation and way

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way, and to settle vs in his, no not the preceptes which he had giuen in the first written law. But when he began to walke this way, how many were there that would accompany him, very seriously seruing him euen till their death, and this only for his loue? The Church therfore knowing right well the glory that redoundeth to almightie God, and the fruit which men gather by the memory of the life of our lord I E S V S Christ and of his sainctes, doth euery day propose and sett them before our eyes, in the diuine office, in the sacrifices and solemnities, that it should not be tedious vnto vs to follow and imitate them whome we prayse, and whose memory we honour, and that likewise we should not esteeme it labourious to walke that way, which alone conducteth vs to eternall life. Hereof mayest thou consider (deuout Reader) what vse, almightie God maketh of his elect, in fauour of vs, because we are (saith S. Iohn) coadiutors to the saluation of soules, we may hence also conceiue how greatlie we are obliged to the true seruantes of God, who haue so put themselues to paines in the exercise of vertues, that they haue left the way open, that such as seeke it may finde it, and by their examples haue taught vs which it is, and with whath force and industry we may attaine vnto true glory. Those of former ages guided onely by naturall light, did vse exceeding diligence, to induce and animate themselues by the examples of their famous predecessours, vsing them as so many spurres vnto vertue, to the end they might in no time be defectiue in the

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obligation they had both to their native country, and to their owne honour: and indeed the milke wher with they nourced their childre in their publique schooles, was the generous actes of their ancestours, which were red vnto them in pœmes, and orations, that by meanes of those examples, the children might be affected to vertue, and enflamed with desire of glory, although it was more vaine then vertuous. This is of such force, that euen at this present, many of our Christians following the same practise, cause their children to spend the most entiere parte of their age, in committing to memory, the heroyicall actes of the ancient Grecians and Latines. But would to God that too many did not employ and wast all their life in this study, and that many others were not more affected to Homer, Cicero and Virgil, then to I E S V S Christ. O extreme indignity of Christians. ! deseruing sharp reprehension and eternall punishment, in regard that they glory to be imitatours of the superstitious Gentils, who as they wanted faith, and the true light illuminating the hart of Christians, so was not their vertue true and solid, but exteriour and vaine. And although that in that time of obscure darcknes, they gaue to men some sparckle of light, some litle knowledg of vertue, more with wordes then with effect, these Pagans neuertheles persiste in obscurity euen in the cleare day of the true light of our lord I E S V S Christ, the soueraigne truth and perfection, and are vnworthy to be honoured in comparison of true Christians, who being illuminated

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nated with the light of faith, can easily discern, iudge and condemne the world with his vnwise adherentes: because as the Apostle S. Paul Saith, the spirituall man knoweth and iudgeth al thinges: Pagans on the contrary, glorying and esteemning themselues wise with their eloquence, become sottish and ignorant, as hauing attributed and giuen vnto creatures, that which appertayned only to the Creatour: but they whose cogitation and confidence is more setled and grounded on the diuine will and doctrine then humane, and do follow celestially, not earthly Philosophy: such, I say shal only arriue to heauen, whence first descended their knowledge, they cannot erre, being taught by the eternall wisdom, neither shall they euer want glory, euen amōg mortall people, though they haue with all possibility shunned the same, but shalbe illustrious to all the world. For though antiquity haue exceedingly honoured great ambitious personnes, that desired to leaue some memory and renowne of themselues in this world after their death: yet our holy mother the Church doth farre more exalt and make more glorious our Sainctes continually in the predication, feastes, and solemnities, which for them and in their honour are celebrated; besides that we beleue that they liue and gloriously raigne in heauen, in the contemplation of their Lord. So that the true seruantes of God are blessed among Angels, and honoured among men, as eminent sainctes, as great they are, and worthy of all reuerence. Altars are euery where consecrated, and churches

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ches bult in their names, their images are honoured, their wordes and workes are highly commended and preached, their reliques are reuerenced and worshipped on earth, their soules glorified in heauen, and the miracles and excellent workes both ancient and moderne, which our lord in them, and by them hath wrought, are with exceeding great glory admired. Our Lord euen in this world recompenceth his elect, who not in appareance, but in effect are vertuous and holy, and incorruptedlie conserue their faith to their Creatour. When was there euer found in any time among the ancient naturalistes, such constancie, such faith, temperance, magnanimity, sweetnes, mercy, iustice, fortitude, and loyaulty, as hath bin found in our Christians, who by no kinde of threatnes or faire speeches of Tyrantes, could be induced, to leaue their obedience vnto God, could neuer be corrupted by any promise or recompence, nor haue bin inclined by any kinde of flatteries or fauours, but persisting firme & constant in the truth, haue nothing esteemed nor feared the terrible and horrible tormentes, were they neuer so barbarous, nor in the extremity of them, or death it selfe, but haue alwayes remayned immoueable and inuincible in true vertu & piety, not desiring reuenge or detriment to the persecutours or executioners, but pardon and saluation, praying vnto God for them. And all this, not att their death only, but euen in their life. For there is no kinde of vertue, wherein the saines haue not excelled, some in purity of virginity, others in continencie, with
great

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great labour subiecting the flesh to the spirit, that euen on earth leading a life more angelical then humane, they might purchase eternall glory in heauen: others renouncing kingdomes, estates, and dignities, others distributing their goodes among the poore, much more highly esteeming the piety of God, and charity to their neighbour, in a base and submissiue pouerty, then any other temporall thing: to thend that being disburdened of the care of these transitory riches, they might with more ease, study to purchase those of heauen: and in the end, for so much as, where they knew it to concerne the honour, glory, or seruice of God, they haue not spared to permitt their bodies to be tormented after what sort soeuer: they haue bin therefore so pleasing vnto his maiestie, that he hath graunted them power to cure the diseased, to cast out deuils, to raise the dead, to foretell future thinges, to vnderstand and explicate the diuine misteries, and finally to doe such thinges, as the diuine might can only doe. Lett then the eminencie of Kinges, Princes, and of all qualities of wealthy people ancient and moderne be confounded, sith they are, and euer more haue bin vanquished and surmounted by vs (poore and feeble) in honour and knowledg. Lett the subtilty of Philosophers be whist and silent, sith these who haue trulie reposed their faith in almightie God, shal know and finde the soueraigne good. I coniure thee therefore, gentle Reader, by the loue which thou owest
to

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to I E S V S Christ our Redeemer, to represent before the eyes of thy spirit, the glory and eternall riches, which the least of the seruantes of our Redeemer I E S V S Christ shall in the most blessed kingdome of heauen perpetually enioy: and with the same eyes afterward to behold all the goodes of the earth vnited together, paragonizing them with those of these Religious, there will not so much as one only thought abide within thee, vntill thy hart hath quite contemned them: and as recordeth Cicero, if all the Empires of the earth, in comparison of heauen and of the moone, be so litle that no esteeme should be had of them, because betwene them there is no proportion, how much lesse will they appeare, being opposed to the Emperiall heauē, the blessed country of the elect, where according to S. Paul, our conuersation is? It is then very reasonable, that the life of this Saincte be seriously read, to the end to imitate him, yea before many other, sith hereof we learne how we may purchase the true eternall goods or riches, which according to the promises of God, we expect and hope for. To this end it is that our Creatour doth dayly renew and regarnish his Church, with new examples of his saincts, that Christians becomming weake & feeble, might resume force to meritt their saluation, in seruing almightie God from the bottome of their hart. For in them is represented vnto vs the vertue of faith, the life of I E S V S Christ and together with it, the imitable life of his sainctes. He will that there be seculer Preistes, Religious

Phil. 3.

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ligious of the order of S. Hierome, S. Augustin, S. Benedict, S. Bernard, S. Dominick, S. Francis and others: that in them we might alwayes haue before our eyes, his life and Passion. Sith then so pious a lesson or reading produceth such fruit, thou mayest well persuade thee (good Reader) how profitably shalbe employed the time, the paper, and labour, which is spent in writing the chronicles of them that haue bin true imitators and representations of the life of our Redeemer I E S V S Christ. How well in like sort their time shalbe spent that employ their eyes and vnderstanding in this lesson, not only to square out a Religious life to such as desire to embrace it, but euen to learne what ought to be the life, what the comportmentes of true Christians, that with their workes desire at least to appeare such: by reason that the kingdome of heauen must be attained by a combatt to be made, and by force of armes, which is an enterprise of valerous Champions or warryers: and this forcible wrestling is not to be made against mortall and humane creatures, according to the Apostle, but against wicked spirittes, as subtil and malicious, as they are potent & puissant. If thou wilt know them, thou shalt here finde their extreme audacity discovered, their fraudulent delusion published, their offenseuue armors manifested, and their assaultes repulsed. If then thou be inclined to war-like exercise, thou shalt here obserue most noble prowesses and heroicall actes against the deuils, subdued by the champions of I E S V S Christ: If thou takest

Matth. 11.

Ephes. 6.

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content in honours, thou shalt here see how highly the true freindes of God are honoured in earth and in heauen, yea and feared in hell. If thou affectest science, of these thou shalt learne, the true knowledge of the fraudes and deceiptes of the world, and especially true wisdom, which is, first the knowledge of God, then of thy selfe: If thou apply thee to the actiue or contemplatiue life, thou shalt here finde a great experience of morall vertues, and of contemplations more then humane, of communion and diuine vnion: breifely if thou make profession of Christianity as thou oughtest, thou shalt here clearly see figured in two tables, what it is to be a Christian, and with what partes he ought to be qualified that maketh profession therof. And that in the doctrine and in the examples of sainctes, two thinges are necessary to our saluation: so that thou shalt here finde a remedy very proper and conuenient to all they desires, and for all thy necessities. Now writing the life and examples of the Frier Minors the especiall seruantes of God, by them, I meane the disciples of the holy Father S. Francis, and of those holy Fathers that did imitate him, who are the principall parties of this historie, they point out vnto vs the true rule and obseruance of the tree instituted by the said Father S. Francis, procuring many in these dayes to blush att their fautes and transgressions. Other Religious personnes shall in like sorte make their benefitt hereof, sith all Religious, touching their profession, are a like, Besides, euery other Christian

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Christian may gather some fruit hereof, if he will bestow the labour to receiue it, as all haue equally graces and fauours of God, by the worthy merittes of his sainctes, Francis, Antony, & others: when with them they study to seeke the loue of God and their neighbour. Our Fathers then deserue prayse and gratitude of our partes for hauing so well conserued the memory of these glorious saints, with a feruent desire to further soules, though they haue not laboured to publish their liues, in a lofty and polished stile, with a connexion of choice wordes, as the precise and curious would desire; But they considered that the deuout Reader leauing the flowers and leaues, would only take hold of the fruit. Now to content and satisfie the Readers, when they shall light on such thinges as are not vulgare, which they shall finde in these chronicles: I haue bin willing here to insert and adde the names of the Authors, whome in this present history I haue principally vsed, and this for greater light and direction: who are these ensuyinge.

*The legend of Brother. Leo, Br. Angelus, and Br. Rufinus,
all three companions of S. Francis.*

The legend of Brother Thomas of Cellano.

The legend of Brother Leonard of Bessa.

The great and litle legend of S. Bonauenture.

The Flowers of the Religious of S. Francis, and his companions.

The ancient chronicles, that breifely treat of the most memorable matters of the order.

TO THE

Vrbertin Casal, in his booke intituled Vita Christi.

The monumentes.

The historicall mirrour of Br. Vincent of the Order of the Preachers.

The ancient memoriall of the order.

The history of S. Anthonius Arch-bishop of Florence.

Master Aluaro of the lamentations of the Church.

The legend of S. Antony, S. Clare, and other saines.

The legend of the five Martyrs of Marocco, of S. Crosse of Coimbra.

The booke of Conformities.

THE





THE PREFACE

WHEREIN IS DECLARED THE
intention of the Holy Ghost in the institution
of the holy Order of the Frier Minors.



It is with great reason, that learned men writing bookes of histories or doctrine for the publike good, doe ordinarily accompany them with certaine introductions, which we call proemes or prefaces, to discouer their intencion to the Readers, which wanting they cannot haue perfect knowledge, nor reape much fruit of what they read. Though in deed, for the Readers to remayne only deprived of these fruites and benefittes, were a lesse inconuenience, and in some sort supportable, if they did not some times conceiue euill impressions, that induce them to contemne the good doctrines and profitable exâples which they read: and this proceedeth of their ignorant temerity, which causeth them to condemne thinges worthy of praise, and falsly to censure that which they vnderstand not, which vice as is it reprehensible, so is it detrimentall and detestable in all kinde of doctrine, but especially in the sacred scriptures and liues of saintes: And therefore we see that God, in all his worckes, would prepare men as it were by certaine proemes, that they might vnderstand them, and expect them with such intencion as he meant to performe them, as when he purposed to renew the world, by meanes of the vniuersall deluge, he conferred thereof with the iust Noe an hundred and twenty yeares before, commanding him the edifice of the arck, to

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thend that worck might be knowne, not only to those that then liued, but also to such as should succeed them afterward. Neither did he vpon any other consideration deferre to giue children to the Patriarch Abraham, but that he should the better vnderstand, and with greater reuerence receiue the grace which was figured vnto him in his sonne Isaac. I am of opinion that for the same respect he was forty dayes in giuing the law to the people of Israel, bountifully imparting vnto them many notable fauours in the meane time, and with such excellent miracles deliuering them from the seruitude of Egypt, that they might by these meanes dispose themselves to acknowledge him alone for God, and completely to obserue his law. I may also inferre the like of the forty yeares that he entertained that people in the desert, that it was vnto them as it were a disposition the more deerly to prize and estimate the so much desired land of promise. For this selfe same cause did God vse Prophetes among his people, were it to threaten them with punishment and chasticementes, or to giue them hope of the benefittes and fauours which he intended vnto them, or to teach them the manner to demand and meritt his grace. And finally all the old testament, the sacrifices, ceremonies, and mysteries, haue bin nothing else but as a certaine proeme or preface of the new, that it might be desired and hoped, vnderstood by them, and receiued by vs according to the true light of the holy Ghost, and not with a humane and fallacious spiritt

Intending therefore to imitate those diuine and humane examples, it seemed to me expedient to add a preface to this worck, that the readers might dispose them to read it with a good intention, and auoid the enormous vice of ingratitude, not duely receiving the diuine graces: and that also they might receiue therof a beneficiall fruit. Which I haue found so much more necessary to this worck, as the holy Ghost in the institution of the Order of the Freer Minors, is more remote from the ordinary intention and discourse of the world: for Mounting aboue the common obligation of the preceptes, he hath designed it to a degree of perfection

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tion more high then the Euangelicall Councells . It is not need-
full nor with itanding, that I search farre to find the proeme requi-
site to discouer and manifest vnto you the intention of the holy
Ghost and the eminencie of this Order, sith him selfe semeth to ha-
ue disigned it both in the old and new testament . We read in the
prophet Ieremie, that when the Hebrew people were obstinate in
their sinnes , and that they opened not their eares to the wordes,
which on the part of the almighty, were by the Prophetes preached
vnto them, God said to Ieremie: Goe to the house of the children *Ierem.*
of Rechab, and conduct them with thee to the temple , and giue 35.
them wine to drinke . Wherto Ieremie obeyed , and hauing
brought the Rechabites to the temple , in to the house of one of
the principall Officers , before him and many others, he offred
them wine in cuppes or vessels , and bid them drinck . But they
answered him: Know Ieremie that we haue neuer drunck wine,
nor will we drinck any, because we haue bin forbidden it by Io-
nadab the sonne of Rechab our Father , who commanded it vnto
vs in these termes : You Rechabites shall neuer drinke wine, nor
your children, you shall not build houses , you shall not sow , you
shall not plant vignes , nor possesse any , but you shall dwell all
your life , in tentes and pauillions that you may liue many dayes
on the earth, wherein you are pilgrimes : And in this sort doe we
obserue it, obeying that which our father hath commanded vs.
The Rechabites hauing giuen this answeare to Ieremie, he had in-
continently the spiritt of God, that said vnto him : Ieremie goe to
the people of Iuda, and of Hierusalem, and thus speake vnto them
O obdurate and obstinat people, will ye neuer obey my law, and
follow my commandementes? the wordes of Ionadab the sonne of
Rechab are they of more force then mine ? He would that his
children and their posterity should neuer drinck wine, and to obey
their father, they haue not drunck any, and you would neuer obey
my commandementes . I will therfore send you a punishment
worthy of your rebellion, according as I haue threatned you: but I
will not cease to fauour the Rechabites , because they haue
obeyed the commandements of their father . A figure doubtles most

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preſſe, ſo farre forth as the ancient ſtate would permitt it, and ſo particular for the Religion of the Frier Minors of the B.Fa. S. Francis, that it hath litle need of farther expoſition then to be red and conferred with the expreſſe wordes of his rule, which are theſe. The Frier Minors haue not any thing proper, neither houſe, nor place, nor what ſoeuer other thinge, but lett them liue in this world as pilgrimes and ſtrangers, and lett them ſerue God, who hath redeemed vs in pouerty and humility and ſeeke almoſe with out ſhame or diſhonour: conſidering that our lord Ieſus-Chriſt would be poore for vs. Now by the liuely example of this Order, and by theſo great auſterities and ſtri& obſeruations; our lord reprehendeth the frenſie and folly of the Chriſtians; who forgetfull of the pouerty of our Redeemer Ieſus-Chriſt, and of his ſeruantes, doe ruine themſelues by auarice, by delicacies and diſſolutions. We hope that God will neuer permitt vs to want perfect Religious of this Order, that ſhall admoniſh vſe of our duety by their example, before the eyes of his diuine Maieſtie.

But S. Iohn the Euangelift and Prophett in his reuelations doth more particularly demonſtrate the time and ſtate of the glorious Fa. S. Francis and his holy diſciples, ſaying: And I ſaw, when the Angel had opened the ſixt ſeale, there was made a great earthquake, and the ſunne became black as it were ſackcloth of haire: (which is a garment made of the haire of a horſe and of very groſſe woll) and the whole moone became as bloud: and the ſtarres frō heauen fell vpon the earth. After theſe thinges I ſaw foure Angels ſtanding vpon the four corners of the earth, holding the four windes of the earth that they ſhould not blow vpon the land, nor vpon the ſea, nor on any tree. And I ſaw an other Angell aſcending from the riſing of the ſunne, hauing the ſigne of the liuing God: and he cryed with a loud voice to the foure Angels to whome it was giuen to hurt the earth and the ſea, ſaying, hurt not the earth and the ſea, nor the trees, till we ſigne the ſeruantes of our lord in their foreheades. This Propheſie according to the testimony of Vbertinus, was preached by S. Bonauenture att Paris in a Prouinciall chapter, as already verified in the Perſon of the holy
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Father S. Francis, adding that he was by diuine reuelation assured, that S. Iohn the Euangelist in this passage, had his eye on S Francis, and on his sacred Religion. The same is affirmed by Brother Iohn of *Parma*, who was a right holy and Religious man, and famous by many miracles that God wrought by him.

But for the more easie intelligence hereof, it must be vnderstood that by the seauen visions of S. Iohn in his Apocalipse, are signified the seauen ages or estates of the Church. The first age was, of the foundation thereof, made by our Lord I E S V S Christ and his Apostles in *Iurie* which began at his preaching, and continued till the Martyrdome of the Apostles. This was figured by the first vision of the seauen Churches, in the first and second chapter. The second age was of the confirmation of the faith, with the blood of the martyrs shed thorough all the world by Pagans and Idolators, which began at the persecution of Nero, figured by the second vision of seauē seales, in the 5. chapter. The third age was doctrine, in the same being declared the mysteries of our faith, and all heresies clearlie refuted. It began in the time of the Emperour Constantine, who assembled the Councell of Nice, against the heresie of Arius, figured by the third vision of the seauen trompettes, in the seauenth chapter. The fourth age was solitary and Eremeticall life, performed with long and great austeritie of life and contemplation of spirit, till the time of S. Antony, figured in the fourth vision of the woman clothed with the sunne, in the twelue chapter. The fift age was when the holy Church began to abound in temporall riches, as well Religious as Clearkes, it began in the time of Charles the great, figured by the fift vision of the seauen golden vessels, in the fifteenth chapter. The sixt age of the renouation of Euangelicall life, is of the warre against the sectes of Antechrist, performed by the voluntary poore, who possesse not any thing in this life, it began in the Seraphicall Father S. Francis, author and institutor of the Frier Minors, figured by the sixt vision of the abhominable and puissant woman of Babilon, in the seauenteenth chapter. The seauenth age shall be hereafter, both in a merueillous repose, and participation of warre, which is to come

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in earth, and shall shortly come in perfection in the generall resurrection of all the sainctes of God : it shall haue his begymning in death before the comming of our Redeemer IESVS Christ to iudge, it is figured in the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse, when the dragon shall finally be condemned, and the elect glorified.

So that in the first age did flourish the perfection of Prelacie and the Pastorall care of the Church, those were the holy Apostles. In the second flourished the estate of Martyrdome, by the combatt and triumph of the Champions of IESVS Christ. In the third flourished the Voice of Preachers and Doctours, the trompett of the diuine wisdom. In the fourth the sanctity and ornament of contemplatiue life, in those that liued and led an Euangelicall and celestiall life on earth. In the fift flourishd the zeale of iustice, by which one discendeth to a commune and lesse perfect life in the zealous & iust institutors of Regular estates. In the sixt flourished the estate of the imitation of IESVS Christ, reformed by the Church in the true imitators of Euangelicall life. In the seauenth afterward shall flourish the tast and swetnes of the glory which God shall communicate vnto his elect, for the wearysome labours which one shall haue voluntarily and affectionatly suffered here on earth, as farre foorth as humane infirmity, shall haue ability to support, and God shalbe pleased to inspire into vs. And our Lord hath ordayned these estates and these ages, according to the necessities of the holy Church against his ennemies the diuels, and against wicked men their followers, who together maintaine ancient warre against his Church, though tolerated by God for the greater glory of the elect: for none shalbe crowned but he that couragiously combatteth. So was the first estate against the carnall, and grosse intelligences & ceremonies of the Iewes. The second against the idolatry of the Pagans. The third against the Arrians and other heretikes. The fourth against the carnall and detestable sect of Mahomet. The fift against the life of loose Christians dishonoring theselues. The sixt against the pestiferous poyson of Antechrist. The seauenth against the army of deuils and their sectatours, who in these latter dayes shall trouble the Church more then euer. We ought neuer-
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theles to conceiue, that though the said estates be thus separated, and each one haue his particuler property, yet the one participating of the quality and property of the other, they come in a certaine manner to entermingle together: by reason that there euer haue bin, and shalbe in the Church of God, Prelates, Martyrs, & Confessors, all affectionate and perfect imitators of IESVS Christ. It is a matter well worthy exceeding deepe consideration to weigh with what profound wildome, these Estates haue bin ordained by the holy Ghost.

First our Lord IESVS Christ, as cheife and foundational stone of his Church, together with his glorious Mother, his Apostles and primitive Church, constituted and founded the first estate; out of which was afterwarde to issue all perfection in the ensuing Estates. In which arose the first battell, our Redeemer IESVS Christ, opposing against the ingratefull Synagogue, possessed of the deuill, wherein as our Capitaine he entred the field of combat for vs and fighting valerously, gott a glorious victory, leauing to the world a new manner of fight, to vanquish our ennemies, and to attaine an eternall and immortal glory in heauen: and as he was true God and Lord of all, it was expedient, that, to the confusion of the ingratefull Synagogue, and for the greater manifestation of his omnipotencie, and clemencie, by meane of his Apostles preaching, he should be knowne to be the true Redeemer and Lord of all the world and of all nations. But wheras they were all Idolators, and addicted to most abhominable vices, by persuation of the deuils, whome they serued, the valliant combat of the champions of IESVS Christ was necessary (I meane the holy Martyres) to bring idolatry and infernall vices to ruine. Att the end of which conflict the world was to acknowledge IESVS Christ, as it began to doe vnder the Empire of Cōstanin, when it pleased God, to giue some peace and repose to his Church. And because a more cleare knowledge of the faith of the most sacred Trinity, and of the diuinity and humanity of IESVS Christ was expedient, the order and dignity of Doctours, illuminated by the holy Ghost, did then flourish. In like sort also, because our spirittes cannot arriue to the depth of the

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mysteries of faith, and that many presume ouer much on the subtiltye and force of their witte, many (particularly of the Grecians) did by diuine permission iustly fall into error, therefore the want and necessity of Doctours did grow and encrease, who obtayned glorious victories ouer the heretikes. And because the knowledge of diuine thinges, doth litle or nothing auaille, if the life be not conformable to the doctrine, in the fourth estate which was litle different in time from the third of the Doctours, did flourish that merueillous, celestiall and angelical life, of Hermites in the deserts specially of Arabia, Palestine and Egypt, very commodious and convenient places, where, with great abstinence, watchinges, prayers, disciplines, contemplations, and other pious exercises, they did subiect the flesh to the spiritt, which they held perfectly vnited with God. But by reason that the malice and infirmity of humane nature cannot long support and endure such a sublimity and excellencie of life: and considering that the fall from so eminent an estate draweth together with it a consequence of enormous sinnes, a coldnes of the loue of God, and sometimes Apostasie: the same succeeded, together with heresies that branched out, so that there was yet need of violent chasticementes. And therefore were the Christians sharply afflicted and chasticed, by no lesse cruell then barbarous nations, such as were the Hungarians, Gothes, Vandales, Lombardes and other, yea we yet see the order and abominable sect of the barbarous Mahomet, by reason of false Christians and heretikes, to ruine, bring to seruitude and sclauery a great part of the Christian Prouinces. This was the fourth warre wherby, in regard of the extreme coldnes of the deuotion of Christians, the Church was greiuously afflicted. Yet did not God therefore leaue his Church destitute of holy personages, vnder whome in so miserable a time, she was supported, as in the dialogues of S. Gregory doth manifestly appeare.

Now our Lord IESVS Christ defending his Church, he assembled and retired the purest and most entier part therof, into this part of the world which we call Europe, in the time of Charles the Emperour & king of France, by whose meane God secured, & settled

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settled in tranquillity the estate of his Vicar at Rome, the capitall city of the Empire, and gaue peace to the Church, the said Emperour attempting great enterprises, and obtayning glorious victories ouer the Barbarians, Pagans, and Sarrazins. In that first estate, humane infirmity was with very great reason condescended vnto, and to that effect was instituted a more lardge & tollerable life, to the end that such as were not capable of the hight of Martyrdome, or of contemplation, might neuertheles finde place of fauour with God, in a meane or indifferent estate, ecclesiasticall persons possessing their temporall goodes peaceably as did the seculers: And because many could not, euen in that meane estate, so strictly containe themselves as to liue vertuously according to their duety, God raysed against them holy men and zealous of his honour, that should reprehend and check their vices and dissolutions: which caused them to raise rebellion and persecution euen against their owne Prelates, and so Christians abusing the benefit of peace and temporall prosperity, the Ecclesiasticall no lesse then the seculers, loosed the reines to infinite vices, as to auarice, simonie, vsury, violence, discord, and adultery, without any remorse of conscience or feare of God: so that retayning as it were the only name and faith of Christians, they in other respectes liued meerly as Pagans. This carnall and licentious life tooke such roote, that all memory of spirituall life and the imitation of the life of IESVS Christ seemed to be vtterly extinguished and raced out of mennes hartes, and therefore it was expedient for him to reforme the Church by renewing the memory of his most sacred life. It ought not to seeme strange not with standing, that the diuine prouidence which sweetly and prudently gouerneth all thinges, would graunt to his Church, estates and temporall riches: for the same hath bin expedient for diuers considerations, and principally to demonstrate that IESVS Christ is the almighty Creator and Governour of all, that to him all creatures owe seruice, & that with all thinges & of all, he may be serued in his Church, against the heresie of the Manicheans: besides, it is to make appeare, that the new testament doth not reprove the estate and quality of Princes, nobles,

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nobles, and riche personnes, though himselfe being in the world, did choose an estate of life in pouerty, crosses, and humi-
lity.

Thirdly he would that Ecclesiasticall Prelates should possesse titles of honour, dignities and temporall riches, that the potent of the world might learne of them the manner to humble themselves, to be liberall, gracious and affable to their subiectes, to execute iustice exactly towards the guilty, & sometimes to shew mercy: to th'end also that the rich might learne not to employ their goodes in worldly and transitory vanities, nor much lesse in pleasures and contentmentes of the flesh, but to bestow them in charitable vses of piety, of mercy, and of a moderate and temperate life: for of all this, did the Prelates of that time, by their exceeding charity, abstinence and liberality, giue a right worthy example, distributing the patrimony of IESVS Christ, among his poore.

Fourthly, that the imitation of the life of IESVS Christ, might be better knowne and more readily embraced in pouerty, crosses and contempt of all transitory thinges, men hauing by experience seene, how many euils and sinnes succeeded in his Church, by meane of honours and temporall riches, and that euen the blinded worldlinges might be assured that the state of life which himselfe did choose in this life, is most secure and most perfect. Fifthly, and finally, to condescend vnto the imperfection and infirmity of many, that being incapable of the excellent and Apostolique pouerty, wrought their saluation by this more large way: whence may be conceiued that God hath alwayes ordeyned the estate of his Church, according as he knew it most expedient for his elect, so that wheras the Church hath bin enriched with temporalities it was by the most prudent counsaile of the holy Ghost. This magnificence of riches and temporall estate, auaileth much for triall of Prelates and Ecclesiasticall personnes, for by the same appeareth whither they be humble in honours, temperate in abondance, and amidst their flowing substance, poore in regard of their will. But alas! few by this triall haue proued such:

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such: for contrarie wise they haue become licencious, and haue conuerted that into intollerable transgression, which was giuen vnto them for inducement to exercise themselues in all piety and vertue.

Now this fall, towards the end of this latter age and estate of temporall prosperity, is merueillous punctually declared by S. Iohn in the fift chapter of his visions, where he introduceth the Angell speaking to the fift Church of Sardis: Thou art esteemed to liue, but thou art dead. Then by way of threates he saith, that in regard of the great euels and litle good which she did, if she did not amend, she should in short time be punished and damned. And in the opening of the fift seale, it is said, that the sainctes out of great zeale required vengeance on sinners: and att the sound of the fift trompett it is said, that a starre (therby being vnderstood the principall of the estate of the Church, seculers and ecclesiasticals) fell as vpon the earth with so greedy a desire of terrestriall thinges, that the pittes of the bottomles depth did open, as if he would say, all kinde of sinnes and vices (as are pride, auarice, cruelty, murders, and other infinite enormities) did, by their euill example, ouerflow the earth: and vpon that occasion, the name of God hath bin from that time blasphemed, and many heresies haue thence succeded, and likewise warre betweene kingdomes and peoples one against an other, schismes and discorde among Prelates one against an other, and betwene Prelates and their subiectes, and all this to the great scandall of Christians, which did so much exceed the other precedent disasters, in regard that it was domesticall proceeding of the cheefe spirituall and temporall personnes of the Church.

In the dregges of this fift age, was all the Empire of Federic the second, a violent persecuter of the Church and of the Prelates, in so much that he brought the Sarrazins into Italy, and there planted them, who by their incursions committed a great murder of the Christians, saccagementes, ruines, and burninges of Churches and monasteries, to satiate their barbarous infidelity. The sunne was then obscured,

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to witt our holy Father the Pope, who was depriued of the reuerence from each one due vnto him, and the moone became bloody by the persecutions, imprisonmentes, & death of the Cardinals and Prelates, that were so much afflicted by the said Emperour Federic, and his adherentes. And the starres fell from heauen, that is, many ecclesiasticall personnes, betraying the Church of IESVS Christ, adhered to the Emperour. The deuils therefore, ministers of the wrath of God, made readie themselues to reuenge such and so many enormities ouer the world, in all the foure partes of the earth, and to this purpose they induced men to vnwonted sinnes, labouring to preuent with punishment the diuine mercy: & doubtes if our Lord IESVS Christ had not fauoured his Church, by a new byrth and reformation of spirit, she could not haue auoyded an horrible chastisement. God omitted not to reueale, to his vicars on earth, and to many faithfull Catholiques, for their consolation, this necessity, and the remedy he intended to the same. He manifested in vision to Pope Innocent the third, the Church of S. Iohn Lateran as ready to fall, but that it was supported and susteyned by the shoulders of two poore men. So when afterwarde the glorious Father S. Francis, and after him S. Dominick came to demanded permission of the said Pope to institute their Orders in the Church, he knew by illumination of the holy Ghost, that they were the two poore men whome he had seene in his dreame or vision, supporting the said Church: and therefore was he the more easily induced to accord their requestes. So that the Church was att that time filled with brutish people, that were all sclaues to their concupiscences, and as terrestiall serpents, full of auarice, and with other cruell and horrible monsters, hauing their face and conuersation vtterly deformed & corrupted, with infinite vices: but particularly with hypocrisie and heresie which then raigned.

Albeit that God as iealous of the honour of his Espouse, was exceedingly moued and offended att so many enormities, yet did he not therfore in his greatest fury, omitt to shew his mercie: for in the middes of his Church he raysed the Orders of begging
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Friers, flowing with men of famous sanctity, that should root out auarice, banish allurements and carnall pleasures, reiect honours and terrestriall dignities, shame hipocrisie, defend truth, stirre vp the fire of charity, reforme other peruerse habitudes, and imitating and following the exampe of IESVS CHRIST, should boldly reprehend the euill deportements and abuse of some in the Church, should by the word of God awaken & induce the people to pennance, should with admirable vertue confound the malice and great errors of mischeuous heretikes, and by their instant and feruent prayers, should appease the iust wrath of God. Among whome as it were being figured by Enoch and Elias, S. Francis and S. Dominick particularly, were ordayned and deputed to this employment. And as S. Antonine in his history recounteth, the holy Father S. Dominick in spiritt saw God exceedingly moued against the world, which he intended to punish. But, that the glorious Virgin demaunded pardon for the Church, presenting vnto him two men, who by the diuine prouidence were already deputed to preach pennance to sinners, to moue them to amendement, which were the glorious Father S. Francis and S. Dominick, by whose prayers God was appeased: and it happened afterward, that these holy Fathers entring into the Church of S. Peter att Rome, did in spirit know one an other to be Brothers and companions, designed to this affaire: wherefore in great charity they mutually embraced one an other.

Thesetwo origines and institutors of two perfect rules in the Church of IESVS CHRIST, were, to witt S. Dominick, as a cleare Cherubim, that with the resplendent light of wisdom, and predication, spread the winges of his doctrine ouer cloudy obscurities of the world, which by this his so great splendour, did giue light and discover the errors of heretikes, and conducted the hartes of the faithfull in the secure way of true peace. And the blessed S. Francis, as an other Seraphim, ascending out of the east, purged with that kindled fiery coale, IESVS CHRIST crucified, and entierly enflamed with the feruour of heauenly loue, he scattered this diuine fire ouer the world,

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both the one and the other leauing to their beloued disciples, the said Properties, though in each of them, and in certaine of their perfect and legitimate issue, the splendour of science, and the seruour of charity, were merueilous well connexed together. But by reason that all the euils of that time proceeded of the vnbridled greedines & abondance of temporall substance, and with all, that men did employ and glutt themselues in vanities, and in loathsome sensualities: the holy Father S. Francis touched with the holy Ghost, would cutt off euen by the very roote, and farr remoue from himselfe and his Order all temporall richesse, as a reformer of this fift age, and as one whom the holy Ghost had deputed to beginne the sixt age and the sixt estate of the Church, proposing to the eyes of all Christians, the life of IESVS-CHRIST crucified, not written or read in paper, but engrauen by the industrious labour of these perfect imitators: as far forth as humane infirmity could imitate the same. It may in verity be affirmed, that S. Francis was formed of God, as the first man, who after the first fife dayes of his workes, was with a mature counsaile made the sixt after his image and similitude: so likewise IESVS-CHRIST in the sixt age of his Church formed S. Francis, according to his image, and in similitude of his life and crosse, in as much as humane fragility did permitt. And this was done for a new augmentation of his elect. He was likewise figured by the Angell, of whome we haue formerly spoaken, that he cryed with a loud voice vnto the foure Angels, to whome was commanded to hurt the land and the sea, in these wordes: Doe not any hurt, till we haue signed the seruantes of God in the forehead: that is, till we haue raced out the accursed signes and characters of the beast, which are the vices and sinnes of men, and haue imprinted, not only in their hartes by penance, but euen in their liues, the signes of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, which is the holy Crosse, the true signe of the elect: which office is conueniently applied vnto S. Francis, as to him that carryed the title, seale, and figure of the life and passion of our Lord IESVS-CHRIST, as well in following the steppes of
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his conuersation in the hight of contemplation, as in excellent and miraculous workes, as also in the singuler priuiledge of the communication of his most sacred stigmates.

Who can euer explicate or conceiue, with what resemblance the holy Ghost in the life of this holy man, hath represented vnto the Church, the life, crosse, humility, and perfection, wherein our Lord IESVS CHRIST ought to be imitated? And it was doubtles expedient for the great necessities of the Church. When our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST came (as S. Augustin saith) the world was in extreme necessity, it is therfore very reasonable that we yeld him infinite thanks, he hauing releiued vs against so many disasters. But who is he, I pray you, that had not bin ruyned and ouerwhelmed by the violent torrent of the malice and sinnes of the world, if the crosse of our Lord IESVS-CHRIST, and his diuine auſthority had not with such burning feruour bin preached in the middes of the world? for we now relying there vpon, are firme in God, and secure against the violence of malice and enormitie. The estate of the world was so wretched and miserable, that there was need of a diuine redresse, by whose auſthority man might be induced to voluntary pouerty, to continence, charity, iustice, concord, and true piety, with all other excellent vertues, which are the way to eternall saluation, and the end of Christian profession. It seemed then that in the fift age, the world was retourned in manner to the like necessity, as it was in before the comming of IESVS-CHRIST, so deeply had it buried in forgetfulnes the good which he had procured it: for it did againe wallow in his former ancient iniquities, in such sort that the charity of God was as it were constrained to be once againe crucified before the eyes of ingratefull men, who seemed to haue forgotten that incomprehensible benefitt, not for the Redemption of sinnes, for his passion sufficed for infinite worldes, but to renew in the memory of men, the way to heauen, which is no other then the crosse and passion. And it not being expedient to reiterate the same, because IESVS CHRIST, as glorious and immortall, is no more capable of death, his diuine wisdom found this meane, liuely and effe-

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ctually to represent in his seruant, the standard of the crosse, his passion, and his woundes, to renew them in the memory of men, that they might follow the perfection of the Euangelicall estate, which himselfe by his most holy life had taught vs.

This seruantelected for so great a mystery, was the glorious Father S. Francis, in such necessity deputed to make a spirituall renouation in the world, of the life of IESVS-CHRIST, represented to the eies of the faithfull in his person, and in the perfect Religious of his Order. And in regard that the life of IESVS CHRIST and his perfection doth particularly shine, as the ghospell teacheth vs, in the passion and the crosse, that is in most profound humility, in most strict pouerty without any mixture of temporall substance, in seruour of charity and compassion of sinners, in worckes of our saluation, austere and difficult, but especially in interiour perfection of charity, wherwith our Lord IESVS-CHRIST, our head conioyneth and vniteth vs with God: and for better performance of this vnion, he counsaileth vs the renunciation of temporall riches, and the abdication of proper libertie and sensualities. The holy Father S. Francis walked this way of the Counsailes of IESVS-CHRIST, ill vnderstood of the world, and instituted a rule and direct path tending to perfection and to vnion with God, wherein walking himselfe, and teaching more by effect then by wordes, he shewed to the world the true way of penance and saluation.

According therfore to the opinion of S. Bonauenture, may be obserued three merueillous effectes, wherfore God sent S. Francis into this world. The first was, to preach penance, as an other forerunner of IESVS-CHRIST, in the desert of pouerty, because Christians had already forgotten it, and therfore he insinuated vnto them the necessity they had therof, by reason of the blindness that their enormous sinnes had procured the. The first name also that this holy Religion had, was Preachers of penance, which title and ministry was giuen them by Pope Innocent the third, in the first confirmation of the Order: therfore was it that S. Francis did institute the third Order, called of Penitents. The second

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cond matter he was to be employed in by the holy Ghost, was, for himselfe and his disciples by profession and rule to renouate the Euangelicall life and perfection, the which to effectuate he instituted with the spirit of IESVS CHRIST, and ordeyned the rule of the Frier Minors, which he being desirous to found with exceeding deepe foundations of humility, he would that his Brethren should be called Minors, that is the least of all other. Many holy Fathers haue florished in this Order, who haue bin glorious in sanctity & doctrine, as S. Antony, S. Bonaventure, S. Lewis the bishop, S. Benardine, and many other Confessours and Martyrs of IESVS-CHRIST. S. Francis did also institute the Apostolicall rule and life of S. Clare and hir Disciples, who by their sanctity and example, drew an innumerable multitude of Virgins that espoused theselues to IESVS-CHRIST. Finally the third thing that this Seraphicall saint was to attempt, was to teach all faithfull Christians, voluntarily to take vp and carry on their shoulders the crosse of our Sniour IESVS-CHRIST, demonstrating vnto them that with pouerty and the crosse, they should gaine and gett possession of true incorruptible richesse, and with labour should attaine true repose. that with humility is gotten true glory, and with the familiarity and frequent communication which is had with our Lord IESVS-CHRIST, is purchaced his loue and amity. The stigmates also and woundes of our Redeemer were imprinted in this glorious S. Francis, not only in his soule, but euen visibly in his body, that the carnall might haue no excuse of not following IESVS CHRIST crucified in his seruant Francis. Now out of these obligations which this holy Father had, as out of a new spirit of IESVSCHRIST there proceeded in him that nouelty of so merueilous worckes, in all sortes of vertues, as those excesses of humility & contempt of himselfe, the austerity of discipline, wherwith he afflicted his body, the great seruour he had of the saluation of his neighbour, wherby he entierly employed both himselfe and his to reforme Christians, & to reduce them into the way of obedience vnto God & his law. These things are vnderstood of few, & also of few prised according to their worth, by reason that they seeme cō-

THE PREFACE.

temptible to earthly eyes, yea mē shunne & iest at thē, because the
sensual mā guided only by natural light, cōceiveth not the things
that are of God. The deuout Christian then, ought now to de-
maund humbly of this soueraigne God, as of the author of this
worck, the light of his grace, wherby being freed of humane iud-
mentes and conceiptes, he may vnderstand, tast, and gather the
fruit of the spirit of IESVS CHRIST, so bountifully communicated
to S. Francis & to his true children, for the reformatiō, assistance,
and comfort of his elect, and of all true Christians.

The summe of that which is contained in each
of these Ten bookes.

IN the three first are written the life, workes, death, and
miracles of the holy Father S. Francis: these first three
bookes make the first volume.

In the fourth booke, are recorded the Martyrdomes of many
of his disciples.

In the fift, the doings and miracles of S. Antony of Lisbon, &
called of Padua.

In the sixt, the conuersations of many other disciples of S.
Francis.

In the seauenth, the exemplar life of the blessed Br. Giles,
his third disciple.

In the eight, the life of S. Clare, & the beginning of her Order.

In the ninth, the institution of the Rule and Order of Peni-
tentes, called the third Order of S. Francis.

In the tenth and last, is treated and discoursed of diuers
things, happened and worthy to be obserued in the first time of
the said Religion of the Frier Minors.

THE



THE
FIRST BOOKE OF THE
CHRONICLES OF THE
FRIER MINORS.

*Wherin is treated of the conuerſion, life, and actions of the
Seraphicall Father S. Francis.*

Engliſhed out of French by F. C.

Of the Birth, Education and naturall inclination of S. Francis.

THE I. CHAPTER.



THE grace of our Sauour IESVS-
CHRIST hath appeared vnto vs, in these
later dayes particularly in his seruant Francis,
to whome the Father, of mercy and
light, would by his benignity impart such
benedictions, and so excellent fauours,
that, as by the discourse of his life appea-
reth, he did not only draw him out of the
darkenes of the world, to settle him in the
true light, but he made him great, in the
merites of the perfection of all vertues.

And hauing extraordinarily communicated vnto him many note-wor-
thy mysteries of the crosse, he merueilously eleuated and exalted him
in his holv Church, wherein he gaue him a right eminent place and
degree. This great seruant of God Francis, was borne the yeare of
grace 1182. in the city of Assisium, situate in the valley of Spoleum
in Italy. His Father was a rich Marchant, of an honest familie, called

*The birth
of S.
Francis.*

Mari-

THE CHRONICLES

2

Mariconi: his name was Peter Bernardone, taking for his name the proper name of his father the grand father of the said Francis, called Bernardone de Mariconi: his mother was called Pica, who was a very pious & honest woman, who procured him in his baptisme to be called Iohn, but his Father afterward att his Confirmation, would that he should chaunge his name, and was called Francis. Some affirme that he was called Francis, because he had with exceeding facility learned the French tongue. Before his birth, his mother endured very much being many dayes in labour of deliuey, in meane while there came a poore pilgrime to the doore of the house, who hauing receiued an almose, said to him that brought it; cause that woman who endureth such throwes of trauaile, to be caried into a stable, and she shalbe incontinently deliuered.

He was borne in a stable.

S. Francis his youth.

Which being done, she was instantly deliuered, and for that respect there was built in that place a chappell, where in memory of the birth of this S. the history of this miracle was depeinted: whome our Lord IESVS-CHRIST would in regard of his birth in a poore and contemptible place, make like vnto himselfe. This chappell is now called S. Francis the litle. Francis was nourted and educated of his parentes, as their eldest sonne. And hauing in short time learned the French tongue, though it be very difficult, they putt him to learne Latin, as most vniuersall in all Europe (for to merchantes it is of no small importance to know many tongues) which hauing learned, and being of age capable to manadge affaires, he trayned him to his trafique, both in his citty and abroad. And though he where busyed and employed in the vanities and folies of the world, yet was it not possible for the deuill to corrupt his good and naturall inclination, which God (who had sowed the same in him as in a good ground) did alwayes conserue in his hart. And therefore, albeit in his youth he haunted and conuersed with his equals, and with them did honestly spend his time in diuers recreations; yet did he neuer permitt his pleasure so much to preuaile, but that as an other Ioseph, he most carefully preserved the inestimable treasure of his chastity. Yea negotiating with merchants, for the most part true ministers of auarice, yet had he not for all that, so sett vp his rest and desire on transitory riches and siluer, as that thy could hinder him from the exercise of the vertues of mercy towards the poore, to whom he alwayes shewed a natural inclination & compasion to asist & releiue them; which was a particuler grace, that God had giuen him, as an infallible note that he was of his especiall elect; which augmenting and growing in him euen from his tender youth, made him so milde and mercifull, that he could not deny the poore any thinge they demaunded him, particularly when the

What a great almose-giuer he was.

the party in necessity did mention in his request the loue of God. Notwithstanding it one day chaunced that being earnestly employed, he could not attend to giue an almose to a poore man that demaunded it for the loue of God. His busines being ended, this true seruant of God, calling to minde that he had denyed a poore man, he sharply checked and reprehended himselfe, titling himselfe, ill nourtured, discourteous, inhumane and cruell, saying that if a freind, or an other man of honour had sent to aske him any thinge, he should haue neglected and layd aside all busines to giue him content and seruice; and yet he had not done so in Godds cause; and therefore he hastened to finde out that poore man, to whome hauing giuen an almose, he asked him pardon. And to the end he might not thenceforward proue forgetfull in the like accident, he againe confirmed his vow, that as farre forth as should be possible vnto him, he would neuer deny that which should be demanded him for the loue of God; and perseuering euen till death in this vow, he continually encreased in diuine graces: wherupon he affirmed, that being seculer, he neuer heard word of the loue of God vttered, but that it molished and moued his hart. Francis then being yet yong & worldly, was mindefull of God in this sort, wherein many that esteeme themselves good Christians and very spiritual doe not any way remember him, considering that often times for a litle almose demanded of them by a poore creature, they feelee interiorly an anxiety therof, and doe with choller disdaynfully reiect him. This was the A. B. C. wherein S. Francis exercised himselfe, with the greatest of the house of God, and therefore he merited to obtaine of his diuine maiesty, mercy and fauour; for in that respect are the mercifull called blessed. So was he naturally liberall, remote from auarice, perhappes more then he ought, doing it to be esteemed and honoured. Therefore did the yong men of his estate much affect and honour him, and in their sportes and recreations did ordinarily make him their capitaine, because he did voluntarily and freely spend in musique, bankets, garmentes and other youthfull folies. But one day considering these vanities, he thus discoursed, with himselfe: Sith thou art so free and liberall towards men, of whome thou canst expect no other recompence but a litle vaine glory, how much more reasonable were it for thee to shew this liberality towards God in his poore people, to whome that which thou possessest doth appertaine, & who doth afterward so bountifully and abundantly accept and recompence the same? In this sort mouing himselfe, he thenceforward employed in almose and other charities, as much or more then in vanities. Francis had besides, a naturall sweetnes in his conuerlations accompanied

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F

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*The good
nature of
S. Francis.*

F

with

*Predictio
of his
sanctitie.*

*He was
prisoner.*

with such a benigne and patience, as made him gratefull and amiable to each one: by reason that his good partes and conditions gaue hope of some worthy matter in him. There was then in Alsifium, a very simple man but esteemed to be inspired of God, who meeting the yong man Francis, did alwayes cast his cloake on the ground and spread it where he was to passe, saying before all the world: It hath bin thus ordayned: as if he would say of God, that the yong Francis is worthy of all honour and reuerence.

There being continuall warre betweene the citty of Alsifium and Perusia, he was one day with many other of his fellow-cittizens taken prisoner by the enemies, and they were all conducted to Perusia, where they remained prisoners for a yeare, till the citties were att accomde. In this his imprisonmēt he shewed a right worthy prooffe of his magnanimity, being amiddes so many afflictions and discomfortes, so constant, temperat, and merry, that his companions did admire theratt, and often reprehended him for it: but he with alacrity answered them: What thinck ye, you my companions? What countenance would you haue me to carry? Tell me I pray you, if we haue cause of sorrow, sith we shall in this respect from henceforward be more honoured of the world. Thus did he comfort and encourage them all in the prison, and euensued them; for the seruant which they had, being expulled as seditious, he voluntarily serued them in euery thinge, and was vnto them a greatfull companion. By reason of these acceptable dispositions, his conuersation and acquaintance was desired and sought of euery one, and by this meane he was in manner constrained to doe many vaine thinges that were litle pleasing vnto him. So did he very vnprofitably consume and waist his age and time, his goods and graces of nature, till about the fise and twentieth yeare of his age, though God had endued him with so many prerogatiues and rare conditions, not to abuse them, but to employ them entierly in the praise and glory of his diuine maiesty: for though he did alwayes keep and preferue aliue this sparckle of the loue of God in his hart, yet did not the youthfull Francis (as being ouer much possessed with a care to augment and conserue his wealth, and to enioy his recreations) vnderstand the celestiall secrett of his great and diuine vocation, which was, with reiection of earthly conuersations, to employ himselfe meerly to contemplation of celestiall thinges, and to attaine and aspire vnto them. And in deed he could not know them, till he felt himselfe touched by the
seuere

OF THE FRIER MINORS. LIB. I.

seuere hand of God, which hauing sharply stricken him in his body, did by a long disease afflict him, and purged and illuminated him interiorly, thereby to loose him from the bondes of the deuill, the world, and the flesh.

Of his first vocation, from his secular to a spirituall life, by many apparitions and visions from God.

THE II. CHAPTER.

THe seruant of God Francis being cured of his foresaid corporall sicknes, and confirmed in his soule by new purposes and new seruours, hauing occasion to walk into the feildes, he mett in the way a man that in his countenance and comportment seemed a gentleman, but was for the present in miserable estate, poore, ragged and in shamefull condition. Francis beholding him, immediately represented vnto his memory our most noble, but poore king, IESVS CHRIST being in the world, of whome he had so strong an apprehension, as if he had seene him before his eyes, and thence he conceived such a compassion of this poore man, that calling him aside, he putt off his garmentes wherewith he was attired and clothed him therewith. The night following, he saw in an imaginary vision sleeping, a faire lardge hall full of verie rich armures, all signed with the crosse, and God for whose loue he had giuen his cloathes to the poore man, shewing them vnto him, who most assuredly promised him to giue all the armures which he saw to him and his, if he would vndertake the triumphant standard of the crosse, and couragiously follow him. Francis awaking, interpreted this vision to be of temporall cheualry, wherein all Christianity was then earnestly exercised, for the conquest of the holy land, the Christians being there vnto induced by the bulle of the *Croisadoe*, wherein the Pope granted plenary indulgence to all them that would vndertake so Catholike an entreprife: called *Croisadoe*, because all the horse and foot men did weare for deuise or badge, the crosse on their cassakes and mandillians. Now Francis hauing formerly had some desire to serue God in this voyage, resolued and prepared himselfe there vnto, hauing conceived a full ioye, and hope, to become a famous and honoured Capitaine, as God (according to his owne interpretation) had promised him. Being therefore demaunded of diuers whence proceeded that his exceeding

His extreme charity.

A vision which he had.

ioy, and the extraordinary contentment which he exteriorly discovered; he answered them, that it was out of a firme assurance which he had, in short time to become great. Hauing then completely furnished himselfe with armours, seruantes, horses, and whatsoeuer seemed necessary, he hastened to Apulia to find out an Earle who was elected one of the principall heades of the enterprise, supposing that seruing him, he might after some worthy exploytes of armes, be honoured att length with the Order of knight hood: but the first night after he was departed, he heard the voice of God, that finally said vnto him: Francis, who can more benefit thee, or better aduance thee, the Master, or the seruant? a rich man, ora poore? He answered, without question, the master, & he that is rich. The voice replied: Why then leauest thou the Lord, for the seruant; and for a very poore man, God that is most rich? Francis thereto as an other S. Paul, thus said: O my God, what wilt thou then that I doe? Retourne (answered the voice) to thy contry, for the first vision which thou haddest, signified a spirituall worck. and not a terrestriall, which is to be accomplished in thee, not by humane fauour, in no sort, but by diuine disposition. Francis then being thus changed; thee next morning full of ioy and assurance, he speedilie toured his iorney towards his contry, beginning to feele in himselfe that contentment which perfect obedience and resignation of ones selfe to God, doth cause and procure to the spirit, with hope that his diuine maiesty would giue him vnderstanding of his further pleasure. And thenceforward withdrawing himselfe from worldly companies and entanglements, his endeauour and cogitation was only deuoutly to beseeche the diuine clemencie, to make him worthy to know wherein he should employ himselfe for his seruice. For although by the continuall vse of his frequent and daily deuotions, he felt to encrease in himselfe the flame of diuine desires, and that by reason of his affection to the celestiall Hierusalem, he thenceforward contemned whatsoeuer could detain him from it, and that he already desired to be entierly exercised in the seruice of God: he neuertheless did not yet vnderstand in what mannr he should be therein employed, he only by an interiour inspiration conceiued, that God reuealed vnto him that this spirituall affaire was to be enterprised and begun, by contempt of the world, and that the cheualry of IESVS CHRIST began by victory ouer ones selfe. Being then thus retired into a solitary place, and by continuall prayers and sighinges, demanding the grace of IESVS CHRIST to be directed into the true way, he heard a voice proceeding from a Crucifix that said: Francis, if thou wilt know my will, it is requisite.

quisite that thou hate and abhorre whatsoever thou hast to this present vainely affected and desired: which if thou doest, thou shalt feele a new tast and sweetnes, in that which heretofore seemed to thee bitter and insupportable; and that which did accustome to content thee, thou shalt disdain. Francis hauing heard this lesson of IESVS CHRIST, and often interiously reflecting thereon, he chaunced one day as he trauelled one the plaine of Alsissium, to meete a poore leaper, wheratt he was att the first apprehension afflicted, beholding him with disdain and contempt, but incontinently remembring the purpose and resolution he had already made, to embrace perfection, and that to be a champion or warryer of IESVS CHRIST, it was necessary for him to ouercome himself, alighting from his horse, he ran to embrace and kisse the leaper, and hauing giuen him a liberal almose, he mounted againe on his horse, and looking about all that plaine he could no more see eye one that leaper: wherfore being replenished with ioy and feare together, he gaue thanckes to God, and perseuering in continuall prayer, teares, and sighinges, he merited to be heard in his pious deuotions. Being one daye in prayer, as in regard of his great seruour, he was entirely as it were swallowed vp in God, IESVS CHRIST crucified appeared vnto him, by whose sight, his soule al melted into compasion, and the dolours of the passion of our Sauour did so pearce his bowels and his interiour, that as often thenceforward as that dolorous passion was represented to his memory, could he with his vtmost endeaour scarcely suppress his teares and sighes, as himself a litle before his death recounted. This man of God then Francis by this vision felt imprinted in his hart those wordes of IESVS CHRIST. If any man wil come after me, lett him denie himself, and take vp his crosse, and follow me. And from that hower, he was clothed with the spiritt of the loue of God, of patience, humility, and piety, by which diuine loue, esteeming no more, but rather condemning all his temporall goodes, and what soeuer he could euer expect of the world, he perceiued and felt in his soule, that God had discovered vnto him a hidden treasure of infinite worth, for the fruition wherof, burning as it were, and rapt out of himself, he determined to sell al that he had, and to distribute the price therof amongst the poore, making by this meane an exchange, of worldly traffique for an Euangelicall traffique, which procureth true celestiaall richesse. In this manner did God draw this his seruant

*A Crucifix spea-
keth vn-
to him.*

*He kis-
seth a
Leaper.*

*God ap-
peareth
vnto him.*

Matt. 16.

Matt. 13.

from prophane houses and shoppes of merchandise, an other Matthew from danger of vniust exactions; and disposed him to follow his steppes, reiecting al other possessiō, to enioy the most precious pearle of Euangelicall perfection, which with his vtmost possibility he sought, found, and purchased. And in testimony and assurance of a true, quiet, and full possession therof, our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST made him a contract therof written on the parchement of his owne flesh, signed and sealed by the hand of the seller himselfe IESVS CHRIST, with the seale of his most sacred woundes: which he did to bannish from the world by meane and example of this his most deuout seruant, the enormous and intollerable bankes and vsuries, and the fraudes in traffikes too commonly practised in the worlde, to the end to further poore Christians in a desire of buying the said precious and celestiall pearle, by the traffike of penitence, of vertues, and of the glorious following and imitation of IESVS CHRIST.

*Of his laborious endeauours to separate himselfe
from the world.*

THE III. CHAPTER.

FRANCIS being very carefull, and often consulting with himselfe how he might become more poore, to please IESVS CHRIST, renouncing the world, and forsaking whatsoeuer therof appertayned vnto him with distribution therof vnto the poore, there being no person to counsaile him in this matter, but his Sauour IESVS CHRIST, his diuine goodnes omitted not to visit him further by his holy grace: For departing out of the citie of Alsifium, with intention to seeke some solitary place, to mediate and performe his deuotion, he past by the side of a Church of S. Damian, which by reason of extreme antiquity was euen ready to fall. He being touched by the holy Ghost entred in, and falling on his knees before the image of the Crucifix, he felt his soule replenished with an admirable conlolation of the holy Ghost; wherefore with an extreme seruour he thrice iterated this prayer vnto God: O high and glorious God, my Lord IESVS CHRIST, illuminate and lighten the obscurities of my hart, giue me, if it please thee, a right faith, an assured hope, a perfect charity, a knowledge of thee my God, in such sort that he may euer performe thy true and holy will, Amen. Beholding after-

*A worthy
prayer of
the S.*

afterwardes the Crucifix with a serious attention, his eyes filled and his face bathed with teares, he heard with his corporall eares a voice addressed vnto him from the Crucifix, which three seuerall times thus spake vnto him: Goe Francis, and repaire my house, that is ready to fall: This so merueillous voice did exceedingly terrifie him being alone in the Church: wherupon vtterly amazed, and feeling in himselfe the force and vertue of those wordes, he tell into a sound, but retourning att lenght to himselfe; he incontinently prepared to obey and to reestablisth that materiall Church, wherein he had presented his said prayer, not as yet vnderstanding the sence of the wordes of God to be, that he should repaire that other Church, redeemed by his precious blood. So that rising from the ground and signing himselfe with the holy Crosse, he returned to the citty, where he assembled all the marchandise that his Father had committed to his charge to traffike, and sent it to Foliginum, where he sold it all, and the horse also wheron he rode, then hastened to the said Church of S. Damian, there to accomplish that which he supposed God had commanded him. In which place hauing offered his deuotion, he saw the Preist that serued there, to whome he presented all the mony he had, to rebuild and repaire that church, and to releiue the poore: besides, he humbly besought him that he would for certaine dayes receiue him into his company. The preist answered that he would willingly entertaine his person; but would not accepte his mony, in regard of his Father and his kinred: and therefore the true misprier of richesse cast into a windoe that there he saw against a wall, the puffle wherein his mony was, which he there left in contempt as base earth, regarding nothing but to vnite himself with God, in the company of that Preist. His Father vnderstanding all this, full of indignation and anger against him, laboured to find him out: but Francis getting aduertisement therof, as yet a fresh soldier of IESVS CHRIT, fearing the threatens of his Father, and to giue way to his choller, hid himself in a caue, where he continued certaine dayes, with abundance of teares continually praying God to vouchsafe to deliuer his soule from the handes of those that persecuted him; and that his holy will would so much fauour him, as being to effect the pious desires which he had vouchsafed to inspire vnto him. After he had a certaine time continued his prayers, he began to condemne himselfe of litle courage, and therefore expelling all feare, he arose out of the caue, and went to Alsifum, armed with the magnanimity and vertu of the most high, to tread vnder foot the serpentes of worldly persecution,

A Crucifix speaketh againe vnto him.

He selleth his fathers marchandise to repaire a Church.

wher-

3. Francis reputed a fool of his companions.

Ill entertained of his owne Father.

LUC. 14.

Treated as asbeife

whereby the deuill thought to enforce his retire. His fellow citizens seeing him vterly disfigured, as if he had bin bereaued of his senses, said that he was mad, and the litle children followed him, casting stones and dirt att him, and crying after him in the streetes, as if he had bin a foole. But the seruant of IESVS CHRIST in regard of all that, lost not his courage, nor altered his purpose for whatsoeuer he iniustly endured, but went peaceably, as if he had bin deafe, blind and insensible, respecting litle or nothing to be reputed a foole in the world, provided that he might afterwarde proue wise with IESVS CHRIST in heauen. Now his Father hearing these cryes, and seeing his eldest sonne thus abused, he ran as a roaring lyon, not to deliuer him from those contemptible reproaches, but himselfe to treat him more disdainfully then all the rest, as if he had bin no longer his Father. In such sort that he conducted him to his owne house, where hauing extremely iniured and beaten him, he caused him to be chayned, and so shutt into a chamber, vsing him himselfe as if he had bin a foole, thinking by these tormentes to reduce him vnto his former estate. But so far was the true seruant of IESVS CHRIST from being any way terrified, or withdrawen from his former pious resolution, that on the contrary he became thereby more firme and constant, and more accustomed to support all; calling often to his minde that worthy saying of the Gospell: Blessed are they that suffer persecution for iustice, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen; and that which our redeemer himselfe said: If any man come to me and hateth not his Father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his owne life besides: he cannot be my disciple. The which speculation was then most exquisitely practised by God, in the person of his seruant Francis, who was not only derided of his freindes and kinred, but much more of his Father himselfe. It might doubtelesse be esteemed a hart of flint or steele, that was not moued to compasison to see him so tormented by his owne Father; and that admired not the cruelty of the one, and the patience of the other. But glorious Francis who had his spirit vnited with IESVS CHRIST, by whome he was comforted, did in the meane time thus encourage himselfe, that by these strokes of the hammer of affliction, God would forge of him a merueillous and admirable vessell, baked and purged in the founaine of most painfull crosses and labours, to dilate and amplifie his glory

glory and to renew his memory on earth. Certaine dayes then after yong Francis was committed to prison, his father vppon occasion of his affaires being gone out of Alsilium, his mother who was not pleased with that her husband had done, conceiuing a naturall compalsion of her sonne, went to see him, and with the gentle and sweet speeches of a mother, endeauoured to perswade him to obey his father, accompanying her wordes that were of them selues sufficiently pregnant and effectuell, with abondance of teares. This certainly was no sclender assault and combatt to the new champion, whose mother could nothing preuaile in that she desired: for he lett her know that his obligation was more to God then to his father or mother, and besides, that he was resoluued to follow the inspiration which he had receiued of the holy Ghost: Then he tourned his speech to his mother her selfe, exhorting her to acknoledge the great benefitt which she had receiued of God, in that he called her sonne to his seruice, and that therefore she ought to be thankfull vnto him. This woman att length ouer comme with the reasons of her child, and desperate of force euer to supplant his firme resolution and constantie, and with all touched with a motherly compalsion, loosed his chaines, and imparting vnto him her benediction she dismisses him. Francis finding himselfe att liberty, saluted his mother, and prayed her to be no more afflicted in his regard, and then retourned to the fore said Church to giue thanks to the Soueraigne Redeemer for what foeuer had happened vnto him. But his father being retourned, and not finding his sonne in the place where he left him, hauing greiuously checked and iniured his wife for dismissing him, he ran vtterly enraged into the said Church with resolution to procure his banishment out of his contry, as a dishonour vnto him, if he should persist in his former resolution. The victorious Francis presented himselfe before his Father, to intertaine him graciously, notwithstanding he perceiued him to be extreme furious, and with an assured and ioyfull countenance said vnto him: Father; I feare not att all your threatens, your beatings, your fetteringes, nor all you tormentes: for I am ready to endure such persecution as you desire to inflict on me for the loue of my God. Which his father hauing heard, and knowing well that he should neuer moue nor itagger his itable and constant resolution, he then thought att least to redeeme and recouer the mony which his sonne had receiued for his merchandise, and to that end sought information of the Preist how it was imployed: but in the meane while he seemed to perceiue a great purse vpon a window, whereto goeing neere, he found that it was his mony; which hauing seized on, it much appeased his fury, the burning thirst of his auarice

His mother setteth him att liberty.

His father hauing his mony is appeased

being somewhat moderated by the application of this medicine.

How the seruant of Iesus Christ Francis renounced his father, not only touching his due, but euen restored vnto him all the garments wherewith he was cloathed, disapparelling himselfe euen to his shirt, and this in presence of the bishop of Assisium.

THE III. CHAPTER.

THe terrestriall father of the glorious Francis being not yet satiated with the cruelties inflicted on him, would tempt the sonne of grace in temporall abilities, seeking to constraîne him to render and renounce the dew portion which of his father he was to haue, and to this effect conducted him before the bishop of the citty. Now the father thus proceeded for feare that being dead, his sonne should distribut the part of his succession among the poore. S. Francis vnderstanding it, went very willingly before the bishop, as a true louer of pouerty and obedient child, without expecting further summoning, and without any consideration of the matter, and there he did not only most readily renounce his paternall succession, but euen putt off the garments wherewith he was cloathed, to his very shirte, in presence of the bishop and diuers others, without blushing any thinge theratt, being mindefull of our most gracious IESVS CHRIT, who for vs was nailed naked vnto the crosse. Then he made a litle bundle of his cloathes, and deliuered the same to his father, saying: Till this present I haue called you father, and haue reputed you so in this world; but from hence forward I may securely say; Our Father which art in heauen; to whome I haue giuen in custody my treasure, and in him haue reposed all the hope of hereditary succession. The bishop seeing so strange a spectacle, nothing resting on the body of poore Francis but his haire cloth, and preceiuing on the other side that the father supported and endured to see his sonne naked without any compasison of his hart: considering with all in the sonne such an extraordinary seruour, with so admirable and excessiue patience: he reputed him the true seruant of God, and therefore arising and standing vp, he with gracious sweetnes receiued him into his armes, and as a pious Pastour, couered him with his owne gowne, and commanded his seruantes to bring him a garment; whervpon they brought

S. Francis is naked to render his clothes to his father

brought him an old bafe coate of a poore labourer, which Francis gratefully receiued, without expecting any other, and requiring that there might be brought him a paire of Cicers, he so fashioned the same, that it couered a man in forme of a Crosse. A right heroicall act, worthy of very great consideration, and merueillous to see after what manner the world (the true soldier of the deuill, our cruell ennemie) reduceth to nothing those that desire truly to serue God, leauing them euen naked without wherewithall to couer them. We ought here to consider, how necessary it is for the good and vertuous to melpriue the wealth of the world; and not to feare the inconueniences therof, to disburthen them of the weight of the earth, with the greater alacrity to carry the burden of our Redeemer, and finally in a certaine sort to disnaturalize them selues, forsaking father, and mother, and worldly kinred, to become cittizens of heauen. Thus was the seruant of the most mighty Monarque, dischargd of his terrestriall father to follow our naked IESVS CHRIST crucified whom he loued; and so armed with the armours of the crosse, he recommended his soule to the tree of life, by the vertue wherof he secured himselfe from the tempestuous sea of this world.

*The first
religious
habit of
S. Francis.*

*Of the exercises wherein the seruant of Iesus Christ
Francis, thence forward employed himselfe.*

THE V. CHAPTER.

THis contemner of the world being then freed of the chaines, and deliured of the threatens of his Father, went into the desert, that there alone, and in silence, he might heare the secrettes of the diuine worde. And as he walked on a mountaine, singing the prayles of God in the French tongue, he was assaulted by certaine theeuers, who rudely examined him what he was and what he sought there: to whome he answered as a Prophet: I am an herauld of the great king. They disdayining this answer, came neere and beate him; and after many threatening wordes, they cast him into a ditch of snow that was there, saying: Thou shalt now lye there as a caitife herauld of the great king. But Francis they being retired, came out of the ditch, and filled with exceeding contentment, began againe to praise God: after he had a long time walked, he came to a Monastery, where as a poore begger, he demanded alms

*S. Francis was
beaten of
theeuers.*

THE CHRONICLES

14

for the loue of God, which he receiued. Thence he went to the city of Agubio, where being knowne vnto an ancient friend of his, curteously entertayned him into his house. And in regard that he was so naked, this friend couered him with a poore cloake, which serued him two yeares, carrying a staffe in his hand, as an hermite, with shooes on his feet, and girt with a lether belt, which made him esteemed to be Religious of the Order of S. Augustin. Now this affectour of humility desirous to lay a firme and stable foundation to his spirituall edifice, exercised himselfe in the actiue life, to witt in workes of charity towards his neighbour, entertayninge his life with much austerity and mortification. For hauing vanquished and trodden vnder foot the loue of himselfe, and transferred it vnto his neighbour, his affection was entirely, reposed and settled in Iesus Christ, by reason that whiles he was yet worldly, he abhorred the accesse of leapers, but now enflamed and enamoured of IESVS CHRIST who (Isay) was contemned in the world, and vlcered as a leaper, so that he seemed no more to be a man. That he might the more perfectly subiect his will to the spiritt, he entirely applied himselfe to the seruice of leapers, often visiting them in their owne houses, traueilling to gett almosse for them, kissing their handes, their feet, and face; breisely, for the loue of Iesus-Christ he assisted and serued them with exceeding dilligence, yea sometimes the better to conquere himselfe, cleansed and purged their filthy loathsome vlcers and ill-fauouring soares, with an extreme seruour and deuotion, as if he had bin newly sent of God into the world as a rare Phisitian for the mortall woundes of sinnes. Sometimes also he layd his mouth on the earth, amide the dust, that accustoming himselfe to contemptes and reproches, he might subiect the pride of the flesh to the law of the spiritt, and might procure to be a peaceable and perfect possessor of himselfe, by which exercise he obtayned of God so great vertues as he had incredible puissance, to cure spirituall and corporall diseases. I will here to this purpose sett downe one miracle, among diuers others which shalbe recorded in this history in their place. There was a man of the Dukedome of Spolerum that had on his face a most hideous and perillous soare, that had already consumed and eaten one of his iawes, and a great part of his mouth, and wheras no remedy could be procured to his infirmity, he vowed to goe to Rome to visit the sepulchres of the holy Apostles, to craue their intercession, and to implore the mercy of God, that he woud be pleased to deliuer him of that so greuous and loathsome disease. Now as he retourned to his house, hauing accomplished his vow, he mett the blessed Francis on the way, before whome this diseased enclined himselfe to kisse his feet,

*S. Francis ser-
ueth lea-
pers.
Esaye 53.*

*He dema-
nded al-
mosse for
them.*

*Admira-
ble mor-
tificatiōs
of saint
Francis.*

*He cureth
one of an
vicer in
kissing it*

by

by reason that his countenance was exceeding venerable: But the humble seruant of God not permitting it, stept back. The diseased arising, the imitator of Iesus Christ embraced him, and kissed his face; which hauing performed with a merueillous compassion, att the very instant that horrible vlcere and the mouth being kissed, were incontinently cured. I know not in deed which of the two is more admirable, either the profound humility of the S. in kissing the wound, or the excellencie of his vertue in working such a miracle. He did not exercise this charity only towards leapers; but did also extend such liberality to all the poore people, that sometimes leauing himselfe halfe naked to couer the, he desired besides to giue his owne person, and especially to poore prelates, whome he asslited with great piety and reuerence. He was likewise very zealous and carefull of the ornamētes of Altars and of Churches, so that he did often make them cleane and decent with his owne handes, that by them God might be serued with more honour and reuerence. To this glorious Saint, pouerty seemed the most precious thing in the world, all his ambition was to possesse the same, in this respect only was he enuious if an other were poorer then himselfe. Goeing on to offer his deuotions att S. Peters in Rome, among a great multitude of poore that were there att the dore, he espied one most wretched and miserable, almost naked and vncouered, of whome he had such compassion, and was so enflamed with the loue of pouerty, that putting off his owne garment he gaue it to the poore Creature, and cloathed himselfe with the others ragges, and took such content therein, that he remayned all that day with those poore people, with exceeding alacrity, reioycing in pouerty, in contempt of the glory of the world, learning by such and the like workes of charity, first to practise and performe, and then to teach, following the steppes of his true master IESVS CHRIST, whose life and doctrine he should practise and teach to mortall men. Being one day of the winter so poorely cloathed, that much of the nakednes of his body appeared, and hearing the holy masse, a Brother of his by chaunce mett him there, who scoffinglie asked him if he would sell him for six pence of his sweat. The seruant of God ioyfully answered, I haue sold it all at a good price to my God and lord. He might doubtles affirme it with good reason, considering he was continually busied in workes of charity towards his neighbour, and in exercises of humility, surmounting the nature of his senses, yet without omitting mentall conuersation with IESVS CHRIST crucified: for more comodiuous fruition wherof, he frequented hermitages and solitary places, employing his time in prayer and weeping: neither would he thence depart til he had learned some extraordinary tashe of fasting.

How S. Francis repaired three Churches.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THis glorious Saint was so well grounded in the vertue of simplicity and of the charity of IESVS CHRIST, that calling to his minde what had bin miraculously cōmanded him by the Crucifix, which was, that that he should reestablis his Church, supposing that he meant the said Church of S. Damian, he retourned, as an obedient seruant, to Alsifium, purposing by almes to execute and accomplish that, which he could not doe with the mony of his fathers merchandile, and this his designe had good successe. For seeking ouer the cittry (where he was alreadie knowne to be the seruant of God) he found mony among his freindes and kinred, and matter requisite for the building of the said Church. So associating him selfe with the Priest that serued there, he began the said reparation: wanting nether masters, nor workmen to this effect, he neuertheless without intermision employed his owne person therein, that his body being already weakened, by continuall fastes and ordinary abstinences, might be more subiected and chasticed, as well by carrying burdensome stones, as by the mortification he endured, in demaunding of them, to whome he had formerly giuen. Thus by the grace of God and the deuotion of the faithfull, he so well endeaoured, that he accomplished the reparation of the said Church: in which labour the said Priest perceiuing how painfully he employed himselfe for so holy an enterprise, alwayes reserued somethinge to refectionate and releiue him. But the humble seruant of God could not long endure that, as being desirous to serue, and not to be serued of any. Wherupon he said once in himselfe: Is it conuenient that thou haue alwayes a priest to serue thee? Is that the way of pouerty which thou seekest? and then he resolued to be no longer serued, by priest or other person, and when he would eate, he tooke a dish and went to the dores with other poore people to demaund almosse for the loue of God: and with them did there eate what was giuen him. And albeit this was att the begining very sharpe and difficult vnto him, yet in the progresse it was so pleasing and contentfull, that he afterward affirmed to his Religious, that he neuer eat with so good an appetite as then. Being one day inuited to eat with a Prelate; he would eat nothing but what

*He will
not live
but by
almose.*

OF THE FRIER MINORS LIB. I. 37

what he had brought with him of almose giuen att the dores. Saint Francis hauing finished the reparation of the Church of S. Damian, went to repaire an other of S. Peter farther off from the citty, and by the same meanes that he vsed in the former, he in short time accomplished this also. After that he went to Porticella, very neere to Asisium, where was a Church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, which was so abandoned, that there was no person had charge therof, nor did any seruice therin. He for the great deuotion he had to the Queene of heauen remained therin; and incontinently began to thinck of repaying it; and being there often visited by the Angels (conformably to the title of the Church which was S. Mary of Angels) he the more willingly stayed there, and affected that place aboue all other, because therin he began humbly, proceeded and fought valiantly; and there ended most blessedly. There by diuine reuelation did he begin the foundation of the rule and order of the Frier Minors, which was not without mysterie, but by disposition of the diuine prouidence, which governed him, instructed and directed him in all his designs: So that this worthy seruant of God, repaired three materiall Churches, of S. Damian, S. Peter, and S. Mary of Angels; and all this before the institution of his Order, and his preaching of the gospell, as well that from these sensible thinges he might attaine to intellectuall, and from lesser matters by course and ordre to great; as also that what he should doe might first be reuealed vnto him by the mystery of sensible thinges; to the end it might appeare, that as he had reestablished three Churches, so also that of IESVS CHRIST should be by him renewed and repayred, according to the forme, rule, and doctrine which he would giue him, as we see apparantly to haue succeeded in the three exercises or warfares (if you will) which are the three Orders which saint Francis instituted in the world.

*Here repair-
eth the
Church
of S. Pe-
ter.*

*And that
of our la-
dy of An-
gels.*

*Of the second vocation to the estate of Euangelicall perfe-
ction, and how he began his rule.*

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe worthy of God hauing chosen for his residence the Church of the mother of IESVS CHRIST, and therin perseuering in cōtinuall seruent deuotions, beseeching her to be his aduocate,
his

his prayers were of such efficacie, that by the merittes of the glorious virgin, he was also found worthy to conceiue and produce the spirit of verity and of Euangelicall pouerty. For as he one day deuoutly heard the masse of the Apostles, where the gospell is read wherein our lord IESVS CHRIST prescribeth the forme of the Euangelicall life, when he sent them to preach ouer the world to this purpose laying: Do

Mat. 10. not possesse gold, nor siluer, nor purses, nor a scripp for the way, neither two coates, neither shooes, neither rodde. And into what soeuer

*How he
rooke oc-
casion to
begin his
first rule.*

place you shall enter salute it, saying: the peace of God be in this house. S. Francis hearing this, cryed out with more then a naturall voice; That is it which I seeke, that is it which the interiour of my hart desireth; and the was he replenished by the holy spirit of IESVS CHRIST with such a vertue, that it did not only trasforme him into the said forme and rule, in cōlent and desire: but euen in operations and effectes: for

immediatly he putt of his shooes, he reiected his staffe and waller. He cast away the mony which remayned vnto him of almose, and contenting himselfe with one only garment or coate, reiected euen the lesser belt wherewith he was girded, and vsed a corde, being more carefull then to conforme himselfe perfectly to the Apostolicall life.

Vpon this Euangelicall lesson, in this week and on this day, which was the yeare of our lord, one thousand two hundred and eight, in the month of October and feast of S. Luke, this blessed S. began the rule of the Frier Minors, being then twenty seauen yeares of age, two yeares

*The first
institutio
of the or-
der of Fri-
er Minors
Ephes. 2.*

from his cōuersion being expired, the twelue yeare of Pope Innocent the third: a worck proceeding verilie from the holy Ghost by the gospell of IESVS CHRIST, not from any humane spirit though God for an instrumēt would vse his most faithfull seruant, as founder of so glorious a fabrick, who, as a prudent Architect, layd the foundation of his Order with violent floudes of teares, with most feruent prayers, with workes of mercie, of penance, and of retirednes and coniunction vnto God, neuer wearied nor desisting, till the holy Ghost had giue him the foundatiō of the Apostles and Prophets, which is that so ueraigne & stable corner stone IESVS CHRIST, on whome the whole edifice being gounded and referred vnto, it encreased in this holy temple of God, vpon whome the S. did not build his order with the chaffe

*1. Cor. 3.
Matth. 7.*

of vaine titles, or of temporall possessions, nor with the dirty dregges of worldly and perishable thinges: but with purified gold which is the Euangelicall spirit, and with precious stones, which are the Apostolical Counsailes: by meanes wherof it was then securely guarded against the force of wind, waters and tempestes, the furiose enemies therof. He began thenceforth to be like vnto Helie by diuine inspiration, zealous

lous of the trueth, of the glory of God, and his neighbours saluation; inducing many to follow and embrace the way of perfection, and mouing each one to patience. His discourfes were no more vaine & ridiculous, but replenished with the vertue of the holy Ghost, and such as penetrated the hart of the hearers, and were of such efficacie, that they terrified the audience in regard of their finnes, so that they were penitent therof, and the hartes of the obstinate, they softened and mollified. Thus did he conuert sinners, and confirme the good in the right way of their saluation.

Of the two first disciples of S. Francis.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THe vertue of this worthy seruant of God being dilated and diuulged in many places, as well in regard of the verity of his simple doctrine, as for the sanctity of his life, many gentlemen were desirous to endeavour also in penitentiall practises to imitate him. The first was a rich and honorable cittizen of Alsium, called Bernardus Quintuall, very famous for his prudence, who hauing long time considered the extraordinary change of life of S. Francis, how he contemned the world, and with what constancie and patience he supported iniuries, and that the more contemptible he was reputed, the more appeared his pleasure and content therein, neuer shewing the least apparence of will to chaung his holy purpose; he esteemed and resolved with himselfe att length, that the same could be no other but a worck of God; neuertheles he thought to proue and trye him, and to that end, after many prayers to supp with him, he conducted him to his house: where being sett att the table (more couered with spirituall, then corporall food) they discoursed of many notable matters. Now the hower being come of takinge their rest, the honorable Bernard conducted the S. together with him into a chamber where there were two beddes, and each of them tooke one to lodge in: but the said Bernard, that desired to proue some thing of this S. did subtilly sayne himselfe incontinently to sleepe: which the S. beleeiuing, rose a lite after from his bed, fell on his knees, and directed his countenance and handes towards heauen, entierly enflamed with diuine loue, and being so on his knees, he began to pray with these wordes: *Deus meus & omnia.* My God and althings; O my God whose are all thinges, O my God who art all my good. Quintuall heard only those words which the S. often repeated, powring out abondance of teares, it seeming vnto him that his spirit received

A Gentleman desirous to knowe with what spirit S. Francis was moued, and proued him.

The prayer of S. Francis.

H

received

received exceeding consolation thereof, without euer vttering any other word that he could vnderstand. The seruant of God persisted till the morning in this prayer, wherein his spirit was eleuated in extasie, considering the great mercy which he had receiued of the diuine maiesty, and that he vouchsafed to vse him for his seruice in this world, as he had vnderstood by reuelatiō; Whereupon conceiuing the importance of the affaire, he acknowledged his insufficiencie and impotencie; and therefore incessantly prayed God to graunt him perfection requisite to the enterprised worck, that he might serue him according to his desire. Then with exceeding affection he said: Thou art my God, and all my hope: all my force, my richesse, my life, my ioy, my satisfaction, and all that euer I can desire; I possesse no other thing but thee. It is thou that hast begun to fauour me with thy grace: graunt also, my most sweet Lord, that I perseuer therein, and that therewith I be guided to my desired end. And hereupon persisting in the profound consideration of himselfe, with a merueillous humility reputed himselfe to be nothing, he cast him into the armes of the diuine & celestially loue, where he felt in his soule that sweet communication of the grace of God. The foresaid Bernard hauing then seene and heard thus much by meanes of a lampe, which he had left burning in the chamber, and knowing all to be true, the day appearing, and the holy man rising from his prayer, Bernard spake vnto him in this sort: O Francis, tell me I pray thee, what ought the seruant to doe, to whome the master hauing imparted many commodities behoufull for his vse, he would no longer make vse of them. The S. made answere vnto him saying. He ought to restore them to the party that bestowed them on him. Bernard replied: it ought doubtles so to be; and therefore, Francis my freind, I will for the loue of God distribute the temporall substance which till this present I haue enjoyed, hauing receiued them as his gift, and this I will doe by your aduise; for I will obey and follow you in this, and in euery other thing that you shall command me. Which the S. vnderstanding, full of ioy thus answered him: Bernard, this worck is of such difficulty, that before it be

An other enterprised, we must take counsaile of God, and affectionately beseech him *occasion* to make knowne vnto vs his will, and how we may accomplish the *of the* same; and att the instant they went together to the Church of S. N. *first rule* colas, and in the way a Canon named Petrus Catanio associated him- *of S.* selfe vnto them, who likewise desired to follow the S. Being then *Francis.* arriued att the Church, and hauing heard masse and offered their deuo-

deuotions, S. Francis comming to the Preist, prayed him to make
 the signe of the Crosse on the missal, and then to open it, and the
 preist obeying, att the opening of the missal they lighted on the
 gospell taken out of the 19. of S. Matthew: If thou wilt be per-
 fect, goe, sell the thinges that thou hast, and giue to the poore,
 and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen. Att which Councell the
 S. exceedingly reioyced, and for it thanked God many times. And
 as a perfect seruant of the most blessed Trinity, he demaunded of
 God that he would vouchsafe by three seuerall testimonies to con-
 firme the rule which they should vndertake; and so they opened
 the booke the second time, and lighted on the text of the same S.
 Matthew in the tenth chapter: Goeing thorough the world, you
 shall not carry any thing with you, neither siluer, two coates,
 shooes, nor staffe: and this hauing confirmed them, they the third
 time opened the Missal, and found a text of the same S. Matthew
 in the sixteenth chapter: If any man will come after me, lett him
 denie himselfe, and take vp his crosse, and follow me. S. Francis
 then turning to his two new champions, said vnto them: My
 Brethren, you haue now heard our rule, and theirs that will ad-
 here vnto vs. If therefore you desire to be perfect, you must pre-
 sently putt in execution what you haue heard. Whereupon the said
 Bernardus Quintaualle gott licence of S. Francis to goe to his house,
 where he sold all his substance, and distributed it to the poore,
 without reseruing any thing whatsoeuer. So making himselfe worthy
 of the diuine vocatiõ, he merited to be the first disciple of this holy Fa-
 ther. The Canon afterward did as much; for hauing renounced his Ca-
 nonry, he gaue all the rest to the poore; therefore he also was worthy to
 be a Sonne of this holy Father. S. Francis the sixteenth of Aprill of the
 yeare 1209. gaue to them both his habitt. Vpon this occasion there are
 some of opinion that the Order of the Frier Minors began on that
 day, because, say they, this word Order, signifieth no other
 thing, but a congregation of certaine personnes vnited together.
 The S. with his two disciples departed from Alsifium, and went
 into a solitary place, where he laboured to instruct them, and to
 exercise them in pouerity, humility and prayer, the true and solid
 ground worckes and foundations of Religious.

*Br. Ber-
 nard
 Quintau-
 alle gi-
 ueth his
 substance
 to the
 poore to
 become
 a Frier
 Minor.
 As also
 Brother
 Peter
 Catanio.*

*How Brother Giles was the third disciple of S. Francis, then other foure
and of the reuelation which S. Francis had, that his, and his
disciples sinnes were pardoned, and that his Order
should augment to a great number.*

THE IX. CHAPTER.

THese tow disciples were tripled by an other of Alsifium named
Giles, who was not in the towne, when Bernard and the Ca-
non sold their substance, and distributed the same to the poore
to follow S. Francis: But att his retourne vnderstanding by his pa-
rentes and kinred, the resolution of those his two freindes who gaue
an amazement to each one, he resolved also to associate himself vnto
them in the seruice of God: and to this effect he left his kinred, and
not knowing where S. Francis then was, falling on his knees he most
affectionately prayed God to fauour him so much as that he might
finde him. A litle after which prayer, he miraculously arriued in short
time where those three great and true contemners of the world were.
As soone as S. Francis saw him, he was ready to embrace him; but
Giles falling to the ground, and reputing himself vnworthy of such
a fauour, besought him with abondance of teares, to fauour him so
much as to admit him into his society. The holy Father seeing the
humility, the faith, and deuotion of a man so note-worthy, said vnto
him: My dearly-beloued Brother, acknowledge the great mercy which
God sheweth you, to receiue you this day for his seruant. Then he
comforted him, and exhorted him to perseuer in the vocation whervnto
God had called him: And conducting him to his companions, he said
vnto them: Our God hath this day giuen vs a good Brother. They then
very affectionatly and desiredly embraced him, reioycing together with
him att the secure acquisition and election of the good which he had
made: Then they went together to prayer, and next to dinner: afterward
S. Francis called Giles vnto him to take him with him to Alsifium to
gett an habitt: in the way they chaunced to meet a very poore woman
that asked them an almose. S. Francis hauing nothing to giue her, tour-
ned to Giles and said: Brother giue your cloake to this poore woman,
for the loue of God; and he with so ready a wil obeyed, that he seemed
to see that almose to ascend vnto heauen, so great was the contentment
he conceiued therin. Now eight dayes after the foresaid two had taken
the habitt, which was S. Georges day, Giles also receiued the same,
hauing first distributed his goodes to the poore, and so the third place
was

*Giles mi-
raculou-
ly findeth
S. Fran.*

*He recei-
ued af-
terward*

was possessed by this man of God, worthy of glorious memory, famous and renowned by the exercise of his vertues (as S. Francis foretold.) And albeit he was of nature very simple, and had not studied, he was notwithstanding so eleuated to the sublimity of most high contemplation, that one might truly affirme of him, that he led a life more Angelicall then humane, as in his history we shall recount. The holy Ghost a litle after sent foure other disciples vnto S. Francis, so that they were seauen in number, and yet but one in will. Now to giue a beginning to some deuotion, S. Francis ordayned that to each Canonick house of the seruice of our Lord (excepte the masse,) they should say thrice the Pater noster. Brother Giles said, that the reason why S. Francis ordayned so short a prayer, was, because he would not haue their deuotion restrayned by the obligation of their constitutions: but that the prayers and seruices of each one, should proceed of the seruour of deuotion. S. Francis thus liuing with his companions in continuall prayer and abstinence in that hermitage, being one day retired into a place a part, and very remote from his disciples to offer his prayer and bitterly to lament his former life (which had not bin without offence against God) and demanding pardon of the soueraigne God, not only for himselfe, but for his companions also, he was filled with an vnspeakable contentment by the holy Ghost, who assured him that his prayers were heard; and affirmed that the infinite bounty had graunted to him and to all his disciples, a plenary indulgence and remission of all their sinnes euen to the vniuersall minute. And immediately in faith and confirmation hereof he was rauished and absorpt with a merueillous light and knowledge, which opening his spirit gaue him clearly to vnderstand what God had wrought in him and in all his. Hauing then thus knowne the diuine will, he sought to encourage his simple company, telling them that they should not be dejected in regard of their small number, but should proceed in hope: because, as the diuine Maiesty had reuealed vnto him, they should multiply in great number, and should performe great matters in the world, notwithstanding their, and his owne simplicity; and should after possesse the eternall kingdome in the next: with which wordes all his Brethren were exceedingly comforted.

*the habit
of the
Order of
S. Fran.*

*Foure o-
ther are
receined
into the
said Or-
der.*

How S. Francis began to send his Religious ouer the World: What succeeded them in the Way, and how they were miraculously reunited.

THE X. CHAPTER.

*That
the Frier
Minors
ought to
be tra-
uailing
ouer the
World.*

Psal. 54.

Vnitie ioined it selfe to the number of seauen, which signifieth perfection, to demonstrate euen exteriorly, how well these new champions of IESVS CHRIST were vnited in charity: this was an other that tooke the habitt of S. Francis, whose name with the others shal hereafter be recorded; so that they were now eight with the S. who, as a pious Father, hauing assembled them, discoursed vnto them of the kingdome of God, of contempt of the world, of the abnegation of their proper will, and of mortification of their owne flesh: then he discovered vnto them that his intention was they should diuide themselues, and trauell ouer the foure quarters of the world, because, not content with that litle number, which then his poore and sterile simplicity had regenerated in God, he desired also to renew the birth of al Christians, inducing them to contrition and teares of repentance. He therefore enioyned his deere Religious children, to prepare them selues to goe to denounce and publish peace to men, & to preach vnto them penance, to obtaine remission of their finnes: which he did in these wordes: Be you patient in supporting iniuries, vigilant and assiduous in prayer, couragious in trauailes, modest in your speeches, graue in your deportmentes, and thanckfull for the grace and fauours which you shall receiue. These deerly beloued disciples vnderstanding his holy aduertismentes, being replenished with the holy ghost, and desirous to obey their Pastour, especially where it concerned the saluation of Christian soules, coupled themselues two together, and sell all seauen at the feet of the S. whome they honoured as their true father, and demanded his benediction. But causing them to arise, he embraced them with a fatherly charity: then gaue them the benediction of the father of mercies: saying to each of them those wordes of the Prophett Dauid: *Cast your care on our Lord, and he will provide for you.* He accustomed to vse this speech to all the Religious that he sent vnder obedience. And knowing well that he was to serue for patterne and good example to the world, to doe that first which he intended to teach; he tooke for companion one of the seauen Religious: and then tooke leaue of the rest, hauing yet precededly diuided the in forme of a crosse: that is, sending two of the towards the east, two towards the west, two towards the south, and two towards the north, each one went with his companion on his way, rich & well clothed

cloathed with diuine grace: but with habitts torne, patched & tuffed vp, bare-foote, and as it were all naked & destitute of all tēporall prouisiōs: preaching thorough the world, more by worckes then by word, giuing example of humility, patience, and pouerty. They wanted no laborious accidentes, being afflicted in many places, and in diuers maners. For of that which we find recorded of two, we may collect the exercises of the rest. The West was alloted vnto Brother Quintaualle, who being with his companion arriued att Florence, and not finding where to lodge, the night being come, they settled them selues against a wall, vnder a pent-house, the master whereof refusing to lodge the by reason of the strange fashion of their habitt, fearing that they were some lewd personnes and theenes, they all the night endured much cold, yea in great extremity in regard of the sharpnes of the season: neuertheles they continually prayed God: In the morning they went very early to masse, praying with deuotion. Now the mistresse of the house vnder whose rouse they had slept the night, being present att that masse, knew them to be those whome neither her husband nor her selfe would entertaine for a nightes lodging. She then said to her selfe: These men doubtles are no theenes as my husband did coniecture; for they seeme to be holy personnes. These Religious in the meane time were beheld of each one for the nouelty of their habitt, but much more when they refused the mony which one present offered them for an almos. For therby were they knowne to be voluntarily poore for the loue of IESVS CHRIST. And therefore the man and woman that before refused to entertaine the, by prayers conducted them to their house, by whome they were exceedingly edified, as wel by example of their life, as by the pious and heavenly discourses wherwith they induced them to haue care of their soules. Thus did these Religious passe Florence: The inconuenience of the night which they endured was litle in regard of that which befell them afterward: for both in respect of the strange forme of their habitt, and for the austeritie of their life, they were most commonly iniured and buffeted, because almost euery one treated them as fenceles or distracted personnes. Some gaue them tates and mockes, others cast dirt att them, some pulled them by the cappuce, others caused children with clamours to follow them. These iniuries were not only procured them by the malice of idle personnes, but also by the subtilty and inducement of the diuill, who thought by these ignominies to terrifie them, and make them desist from their holy resolution. But they being armed with the grace and patience of IESVS CHRIST, did not only support the extremity of hunger, cold, and disgraces, but euen did not by any exteriour signe appeare to be moued withall.

*What
the good
Religious
endured
in this
first obe-
dience.*

So

*S. Fran.
obtainech
of God
speedily
to see his
Religious
so far re-
mote one
from an
other.*

So farre also were they from replying to them that abused them, that receiuing their persecutions as a great fauour, they ordinarily prayed to God for them: in such sort that these remonstrances of patience and charity hauing bin by certaine weighed and considered, their vertue and sanctity did consequently appeare. They therefore repenting to haue offended them, repayed vnto them as to holy personages humbly to require pardon: vertue being of such force and efficacie, that albeit for a time it be resisted and contemned, yet in the end it doth alwayes conquere and triumph ouer the enemies therof. Some certaine time being spent after the separation of these good Religious, their compafsionate Father being vnable any longer to endure and support this ircksome abience: had a vehement desire to recollect his dearly beloued children: But the difference and distance of the places where they were being such as it could not be don but by the diuine prouidence, the saint fell to his deuotion, and prayed God that, as he had formerly assembled certaine Israelites very distantly separated and dispeaced, so he would also now vouchsafe to vnite and assemble his dearly beloued Brethren. After a short time he miraculously knew the approbation of his prayer: for without any humane dilligence or industry, they were all, as S. Francis had desired present in one very place: which was not without an exceeding astonishment vnto his Brethren, who admired the diuine prouidence. The holy Father entertained his children with incredible ioy: they then began among them selues to recount what they had endured in their traualle, and what was the fruit of their labours amongst the faithfull Christians. Thus did these new Apostles in very short time beginne to exercise the selues in the seruice of God, by the footesteppes of his holy disciples. About that time, four other honorable gentlemen did adhere vnto them, so that they were eleuen, whose names were these: Brother Bernard Quintaualle, Brother Peter Catanio, Br. Giles of Alsifium, Br. Sabadin, Br. Morigo the lesse, Br. Iohn Capelle, Brother Phillip the long, Br. Iohn of S. Constant, Br. Barbarus, Br. Bernard of Veridant, and Br. Angelus Tancredas of Riete.

Of the first rule that S. Francis ordained.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

S. Francis perceiuing his disciples to approach to the Apostolicall number, began to write downe the forme and rule of life which they should obserue, wherto for foundatiō he gaue the obseruance of the gospel, therto adding certaine other pointes necessary for such as liue

liue in Congregation, and this to the end the professours of his rule should not vary and differ in any thing from the intention and will of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, as well in his Preceptes as Counsels: which rule is this ensuying, hauing since that time bin augmented by S. Francis, as in his proper place shal appeare.

THE FIRST RVLE OF THE HOLY FATHER S. FRANCIS.

In the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the Holy Ghost.

This is the life that Brother Francis presented to Pope Innocent the third, who condescended therunto with his owne mouth, and confirmed it to him and his Religious, present and to come: and therefore the said Brother Francis (and whosoever shalbe principall of the said Order or Religion) promisetb obedience and reuerence to the Pope, and his successeur.

The forme of the rule instituted by the holy Father S. Francis, and confirmed by Pope Innocent the third.

Of the three principall vowes, of chastity, obedience, and pouerty.

THE I. CHAPTER.

THe life and rule of the Frier Minors is thus; That they liue chastly vnder holy obedience, and not possessing any thing in propriety: That they follow the life and doctrine of IESVS Matt. 19.
CHRIST who sayeth: If thou desirest to be perfect goe, and sell Matt. 16.
what thou hast, and giue it to the poore, for doing so thou shalt purchase treasure in heauen: If any man desire to come after me, lett him Luc. 14.
renounce his proper will, lett him take vp his crosse and follow me: Matt. 19.
and he that will come after me, and forsaketh not father, mother, wife, children, and hateth not himselfe for my loue, cannot be my disciple. Besides; whosoever shall forsake Father, mother, brothers and sisters, wiues, children, and all his earthly substance for my loue, shall receiue an hundred fold, and purchase eternall life.

Of the manner of admitting the Brethren into the Order; and of cloathing them, and of the habit of the Frier Minors.

THE II. CHAPTER.

VVhen any one by diuine inspiration shalbe disposed to enter into this Religion, lett him be benignely receiued by the Superiour of the Brethren: and hauing proued him to be stable in this purpose, lett him send him to his Minister Prouinciall: and lett the Brethren in the meane while be wary not to entermidle in any sort with their worldly affaires. Now he being presented to the Prouinciall (who shall graciously entertaine him) after he shall haue diligently examined his will, and the cause inducing him to desire his entrance into this Religion, lett him seriously expose vnto him the manner of life of the Brethren. Which don, he ought by pregnant perswasions to exhort him, without lawfull impediment to sell all his substance, before he dispose of his life, and lett him giue it to the poore, if he thincke good; but lett the Brethren Ministers be very respectiue that in treating this matter, they doe not persuade or induce him in any sort whatsoeuer to giue any mony to themselves or to their Couent: Neuertheles if perhappes the Couent or the Brethren haue need of any thing that he hath, and he offering it, and desiring of himselfe to giue it, they may receiue it, as if he distributed it in almose to any other poore, and no otherwise, prouided yet that this gift be not mony. This being performed, I meane his substance being distributed to the poore, or as God shall inspire him, and returning to the Couent, the Minister Prouinciall shall then giue him the habitt of probation,

The cap- which he shall weare one year. This habitt shalbe such: two coates
peron is a without cappuce, and the corde: And the year of probation ended,
peece of his profelson shalbe procured, and when he shall haue submitted him-
cloth selfe to holy obedience, he may not be permitted to enter into any other
which Religion, nor to be disobedient to the Pope. And if there be any, that
the nouri- for some lawfull impediment, cannot distribute his substance for the
ses weare loue of God, it shall suffice that he renounce and abandon it, in what-
on their soeuer other manner. Lett it not be permitted that any be receiued
brefts against the ordonnance and constitutions of the Church. All those that
from the haue promised obedience, must haue one coate with the cappuce, and
neck to an other without it, if it be needfull, and a corde to gird him, and the
the cord. linnen breeches. All the Brethren must be cloathed with course cloth,
 and they may pach it with sack cloth and other rude peices, because our

Lord

Lord saith in the gospel: They that are clothed sumptuously, dwell in the Courtes of Princes: for, though they be called hypocrites, lett them *Matt. 11.* not yet omitt to doe that which they ought for the seruice of his diuine maiesty, & for the saluation of their soules, & lett the not in this world seek precious garmentes, that they may hereafter find better in heauen.

Of the diuine seruice, and of fasting.

THE III. CHAPTER.

And because our Lord in one place saith: This kinde of deuill cannot be cast out but by vertue of fast and prayer. And in another: When ye fast be not melâcholie, as hypocrites: lett the Brethren therfore that shalbe Preistes, say the diuine seruice, & praise God, as Preistes ought to doe; and for the liuing and dead, lett them say that which is accustommed to be said; & besides for the defectes & negligences of the Brethren, lett them euery day say the Psalme *Miserere*, & one *Pater noster*, and for the Religious decaled, a *De profundis* and a *Pater noster*. They may possesse bookes necessary for their diuine seruice. The lay Brothers that can read, may haue a Psalter, but they that cannot read, may not haue nor keep any bookes: but lett them euery day for their mattins say the *Credo*, with twenty fve *Pater nosters* and *Gloria Patri*, & so much, att the third, sixt, and ninth houre; att Euen song the *Credo* and twelue *Pater nosters*, att Complin, the *Credo*, with seauen *Pater nosters* and the *Requiem aeternam*; then for the defectes and negligences of the Brethren, euery day three *Pater nosters*. Al the Brethren as well Clerkes as the lay, shalbe obliged to fast from Alsainctes to Christmas, and from the Epiphanie, when our Lord IESVS CHRIST began to fast, vntill Easter: Att other times, they shall not be bound to fast by this rule; the fridays excepted they may indifferently eat of all meates that shalbe giuen them, according to the permission of the Ghospell, and *Luc. 10.* the Constitution of holy Church.

How the Ministers ought to gouerne themselves in dispencing with the Religious concerning their obedience.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

IN the name of God, al the Brethren that are elected ministers, & are seruantes to the other Brethren, ought to appoint the places & Couentes where they shal iudge most conuenient to dwell: they must often visit the, & admonish them to obserue & accõplish their professiõ

promise, vow, and oath: and lett them spiritually constrain them to satisfie this obligation: and lett all my other blessed Brethren humbly and diligently obey them in whatsoeuer shall concerne their saluation, and shal not be contrary to this rule: and lett them liue together with such charity that they proceed not against the word of God, where he saith:

- Matt. 20.* Doe vnto men that which you would haue men doe vnto you, and doe not that which you would not they should doe to you. Lett the Ministers and seruantes, remember that which our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST saith: I am not come to be serued, but to serue: so that the soules of the Brethren being giuen them in chardge, they ought to haue a very respectiue care of them, that none doe perish by their fault and euill example, and that they render not account for them to God, att the terrible iudgment.

Of fraternall correction in offences: that the Ministers ought not to giue scandale, and that they may not haue dominion of any thing.

THE V. CHAPTER.

- Hebr. 10.* **Y**ou that are Ministers, haue a speciall guard and care of your soules, and of those of your Brethren: For it is a very terrible and fearfull thing to fall into the handes of the liuing God, moued to anger. And if any of you, command the Brethren any thing, against the rule and this forme of life, or against conscience, know yee that if he doe it not, he is not obliged vnder obedience. Lett all the Brethren that are subiect to the Minister, the seruant of his Brethren, obserue his actiōs with great dilligence and consideration. And if they perceiue any of their Ministers to proceed according to the flesh, not according to the spirit, or our rule, if he amend not after the first admonition or correction, lett him be notified vnto the Father Generall, and the seruant of this confraternity, as incorrigible, at the Chapter of Penticost, without contradiction or delay. If among the Brethren where they shall liue, there be any that will not proceed according to the spirit, and our profession, let the Brethren in whole company they shall be, admonish, aduise, and with humility mildly reprehend him, euen to the third time: But if after the third admonition he do not amend, lett them informe the Minister Prouinciall, or bring him to his presence with the first opportunity: And the said Minister shall proceed therein as God shall inspire him. Lett all the Brethren, as well Ministers, seruantes, as others be very respectiue not to be angry, passionate, or troubled for the sinne or euell example of the other Brethren: For the deuill seeketh no other thing but

But to damne many, by the sinne of one; but lett the consider how they may spirituallly alsist him, because they that are in health need not a Phisition, but they that are diseased. It is prohibited to all the Brethren and Ministers of this Order, to be capable of enioying possessions, dominion or leignurie; for, as our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST saith: The Princes of the world, haue commaund ouer them: lett vs be carefull that it be not so among vs; but he that seeketh and desieth to be greatest, lett him be the least, and seruant to all others. Lett not any Brother doe or speake euill of an other: but lett them reciprocally serue and obey each other, with a spirituall charity of the spirit, according as their necessity shal require; for that is the holy and true obedience of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. And lett all the Brethren, of what degree soeuer they be, know, that if they erre from the preceptes of God, and are disobedient as the Prophett saith, they are accursed for their sinne whiles they are out of obedience. And if they perseuer in the commandementes of God, as they haue promised in the obseruance of their Euangelicall professio, lett them rest assured that they are blessed of God.

*Note this
word.*

*Matt. 9.
Luc. 12.*

Psal. 138.

*What recourse the Brethren may haue to their Ministers and that no
Brother may be called Priour.*

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THe Brethren that shall not be able to obserue our forme of life in the places whither they shall be sent, lett them as soone as they can, haue recourse to their Minister Prouinciall, and lett them enforme him of their necessity. The Minister Prouinciall, shal then endeauour to provide for them, and shall doe what in the like accident he would should be done to him. Lett not any Brother be called Priour: but lett all generally with one accord be called Brothers, and when there shalbe need, lett on wash an others feet, to exercise humility.

*Of the manner to serue and provide for the house, and to be employed in law-
full exercises that redound to the common good, and that the Brethren
may not haue Couent, nor Church as properly their owne.*

THE VII. CHAPTER.

IN what place soeuer any of the Brethren shall reside, for the seruice of others, they shall not vndertake the offices of men of the Chamber

Psal. 127
2. Thes. 3.

8. Hier.

to be keeper or disposer of the wine or victuall prouision, nor in any sort accept of other chardg in the house where they shal dwell: to the end they neither breed nor procure scandal or detriment to their soules: but lett them be inferiour and subiect to all that shalbe in the said house. And the Brethren that shalbe fitt to labour and performe any thing, lett them be employed in the art and exercise they know, prouided that it be not contrary to the saluatiō of their soules, sith the Prophett saith. Because thou shalt eat of the labours of thy handes, thou shalt be blessed: and the Apostle also: he that wil not work, lethim not eat. Lett each one therefore with charity exercise the art and office wherein he shalbe employed, and for recompence of the manuall worckes they shall doe, they may receiue thinges necessary to their life, prouided that it be not raony: and if any thing be further needfull vnto them, lett them demaund it in al-mole as other poore people doe. It shalbe permitted them to possesse instruments and tooles necessary to the trade and art wherein they are skillfull: But lett all the brethren be respectiue to be euer employed in some good and commendable art, because it is written. That a man ought to be alwayes busied in some good worck, that if the deuill come to tempt him, he finde him well employed. And in an other place it is said, that idlenes is a capitall ennemie to the soule, and therefore the true seruantes of God ought to be exercised in prayer or in some other good worcke. Lett the Religious be very carefull not to appropriatt to themselves any place where they shall dwell, or any other, be it an hermitage, or whatsoeuer other place, nor lett them maintaine it as theirs, and if any come to visitt them, be it freind, ennemy, theefe, or murderer, lett them graciously receiue him. When the said Brethren shall dwell neere one to an other, lett them often charitably visitt each other, and lett them spirituallly honour one another without any murmure, but lett them be ioyfull and content in our Lord, lett them with modesty shew themselves gracious exteriorly and interiorly.

How strictly it is forbidden to the Brethren to receiue mony, and in what manner they are to be punished for it.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

GOd gaue this commandement to his Apostles: Be you intentiue and keepe your selues from all kinde of malice and avarice, as also from letting your thoughtes and affections on this life, and being ouer carefull to purchase the thinges of the world. And therefore no Brother in whatsoeuer place he be, either to make his residence, or
to

to trauaile, or for any other occasion whatsoever, may haue mony in any manner or fashion that can happen, nor lesse may he receiue it for recompence of his labours; breifely, no Brother may touch or possesse mony for any necessity that may befall him, vnlesse it be to releiue the vrgent need of the sick Brethren: because we must no more esteeme mony, then stones or thornes; to the end that, sith we renounce and abandon all our temporall substance in this life, we doe not afterward for so small a matter make shipwrack of the eternall kingdome. If peradventure we chaunce to finde mony in som place, lett vs no more regard then durt: because whatsoever is in the world, is meere vanity. But if it should happē, which God forbid, that any brother receiue mony, excepting vpon the aforesaid necessity of the sicke, lett him be reputed by the Confraternity, for a false Religious, and these, as he that taketh a purse, if he be not truly penitent. Lett not the Brethren in any manner in the world receiue mony or cause it to be receiued, nor much lesse lett them demand or procure it to be demanded by a third person in any sort whatsoever, nor lett them goe in company of men that demand it for them. But the Brethren may, in the houses and places whither they shall goe, exercise other seruices that shall not be contrarie to our Religion and rule, with the benediction of our Lord. They may demand alms, for the lepers only, whome they know to be in great necessity; but lett them be very wary of mony, and lett them likewise take keed not to searce the world, for any occasion of vnlawfull gaine that may be presented.

*Of the manner of demanding alms, and of their ordinarie diet
and refection.*

THE IX. CHAPTER.

Lett all the Brethren laboure to imitate the pouerty and humility of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST: and lett them remember that nothing is necessary in the world, but, as the Apostle saith, to haue wherewithal to releiue and couer vs: wherwith we ought to content vs, and seek no more. We must reioyce when we conuerse with poore and base personnes, that are contemned of the world, but especially with the diseased, lepers, and poore begars thorough the streetes. Whē it shalbe necessary to goe to demand alms att the doores, lett thē goe without any feare or shame, calling to minde that the sonne of Almightie God, presented his countenance as a hard stone to the blowes and affrontes of the world, and he was nothing
ashamed

ashamed, to be poore and a stranger, and to liue vpon almose, together with his most sacred mother the virgin Mary. And if men deny almose, and retourne disgraces to the brother that shall demaund it, lett him thanke God for it, and pray for them: because he shall receiue, saith IESVS CHRIST, great honour, of the shame that men shall procure him, and lett him know, that the iniuries and scornes which shalbe don him, shall not be imputed as a fault to him that shall receiue them, but to him indeed that shall offer them: likewise that almose is a rent and obligation due to the poore, which our Lord IESVS CHRIST hath merited, purchaced and left vnto vs. And the Brethren that trauaile in seeking almose, shall haue great recompence therof, besides that they procure a meritt to them that giue it; for whatsoeuer men doe in this world shall dissolue to nothinge, excepting almose, and worckes don in charity, for which they shall receiue of God an eternall recompence. Lett each Brother with all assurance discover his necessity to his fellowes, that they may comfort him with good wordes, and actually asist him according to their ability; and lett each of them loue and cherish his Brothers, as the mother loueth and cherisheth her owne child, in what God shall giue him grace and faculty, to asist him. He that eateth not, lett him not contemne him that eateth; and he that eateth, lett him not the more esteeme of him that eateth not. If any necessity happen, it shalbe permissable to all the Brethren where they shall reside, to eat of all humane thinges, as God said of Dauid, who did eat the bread that was permitted to Preistes only to eat. Lett the Brethren remember that which IESVS CHRIST saith: Beware of chardging and ouerburdening your hart with two much drincking & eating, for feare that sleepe incontinently surprise you, and that sloath be occasion that in the latter day you be intercepted in the snares of death; the which before the entrapping of each man liuing shall neuertheles haue diuerfes effectes, according as they shall finde the soule disposed, either to life or to death, the one and the other eternall. But in time of manifest necessity, lett the Brethren behaue themselues as their need shal import, as our Lord shall better instruct them, because necessity is not subiect to law.

In what manner the sick Brethren ought to be serued.

THE X. CHAPTER.

IN any place where a Brother shall fall sicke, lett him not be left alone, but lett there be alwaies one or more, if need require to serue him, as they

they would desire to be if they were in his place: if vpon necessity there be no Brother, lett care be taken to leaue some charitable persō to attend and serue him in his sicknes: and I pray the sick Brother, that what soeuer may happen vnto him, he alwayes giue thancks vnto God, and be content to be such as God would haue him to be, either aliuē or dead: that he continue in sicknes or recouer his health: because all they whome God hath predestinated to eternall life, are ordinarily by him instructed and diciplined, with the rod of his afflictions and sicknesse, with a spirit of compunction and bitternes, as he saith in the third of the Apocalipse; I chastice and correct him whome I loue. And if the sicke be disquieted and palsionat against God or the Brethren, or haue an ouer greedy affection to phisicke, desiring and procuring beyond reason, to free his flesh which hath so litle time to liue, and the which is ennemy to the soule; the said sick Brother must not esteeme the same to proceed of a good ground, but lett him assure and repute himselfe to be carnall: for he doth not seeme to be of the number of the true seruantes of God, sith he more affecteth the body then the soule, considering that he striueth to worck more therin, then the Phisicion findeth for his cure.

That the Brethren ought mutually to loue each other, that they ought not to calumniat any person, nor in any sort to murmur.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

Lett the Brethren be wary not to accuse any of malice or to calumniat him, and lett them not be contentious among themselves or with others, lett them also shunne perfidioulnes and disloyalty, but lett them be carefull to performe their exercises in the grace of God with silence, and lett them not maintaine quarelsome disputes, neither among themselves nor with others: but rather that they first yeld, and say: We are vnprofitable seruantes, answearing alwayes with humility, and being very carefull of growing into palsion: For men that maintaine their choller against their neighbour, are obliged to render account therof at the iudgement of God: and he that shall vpbraid his neighbour with contemptible wordes, shalbe condemned to the fire of hell. Lett them therefore loue one another, as our lord teacheth vs, when he saith: My children, this is the precept I giue you, that you loue one another, as I haue loued you. Now the truest manner of mutuall loue, according to the Apostle, is knowne by wordes, by worckes, and in verity. Lett them not curse any personne, lett

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them

them not murmur, nor lett them not speake ill of any, for it is written: The murmurers and detractors are abhorred of God. Lett them be modest, shewing themselves gentle and tractable to all, not iudging nor condemning any man; and, as our lord saith, consider not the little finnes of others, but rather with a bitterness and contrition of your soule obserue your owne, and endeauour to enter by the streight gate, because our lord saith, the way is streight, as also is the gate that giueth entry to eternall life, and there are few that finde it and enter theratt.

*That the Brethren ought to be wary not to behould nor conuerse
With Women.*

THE XII. CHAPTER.

Lett all the Brethren in whatsoeuer place they reside, very respectfully forbear wanton lasciuious aspectes, and lewd and dangerous conuersations with women. When it shalbe necessary, lett none presume to speake alone with a woman, excepting the Preistes, who may speake modestly vnto them, when they giue them any penance or any spirituall counsaile, and lett no woman, in what soeuer manner, be receiued to obedience by any Brother what soeuer, to whome it shalbe yet permitted to counsaile her spiritually, to doe penance where she will. And lett vs all carefully preserue ourselves, with exceeding warines and dilligence; for God hath said, that what man soeuer shall behold a woman to couett her, he hath already sinned with her in his hart, because it is not lawfull for vs to behold that, which is not lawfull for vs to desire.

*Of the punishment of the Brethren that shall fall into the sinne
of the flesh.*

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

If any Brother, by instigation of the deuill, committ the sinne of the flesh, lett him vtterly loose and be depriued of the habit, which by his offence and lewdnes he shall haue defiled, and wherof by his sinne he shall haue depriued himselfe: lett him be vtterly expelled the Religion, and lett him goe to doe penance for his sinne.

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OF THE FRIER MINORS LIB. I.
*Of the manner the brethren ought to obserue trauailling
thorough the world.*

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

VVhen the Brethren thall trauaile through the world, they must not, nor may not carry any kind of prouision, nor wallet, purse, mony, nor staffe, and into what soeuer houses they shall enter, they shall say: The peace of our lord be in this house, and being entertained in any place, they may there repose, and eat and drinke of what shalbe presented vnto them. And if they shall be abused in wordes or effectes, by any one, lett them not be moued therewith, yea if one should giue them a buffet on the one cheek, lett them tourne the other; if any one would disapparell them, lett the not hinder it, yea if one should violently robbe them of their coat, lett them not aske it againe, but lett them beleeue that all this arriueth vnto them by the prouidence of God.

That the Religious may not haue any horses.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

ICommand all my Brethren, aswell Preistes as lay, that when they shall trauaile thorough the world, or shall reside in any place, they haue no kind of beast to ride on, neither for them selues, nor for others, nor that it be euer lawfull for them to ride on horse-backe, but in case of sicknes, or of manifest necessity.

Of them that shall goe to the Mores and Infidels.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

OVr lord saith: Behold I send you as sheep in the middes of wolues. Be ye therefore wise as serpentes, and simple as doves. And if any Brother moued with a diuine inspiration, would goe among the infidell Mores, he may not goe without licēce of his Minister Prouinciall, who knowing that Religious sufficient, and of such a spirit, that therof one may hope some fruit to redounde to others (not only saluation to himselfe) let him not be denied, all vnderstood with the assistance of God. For the said Minister Prouinciall shalbe obliged to be accountable vnto God, if graunting, or refusing permissiō to the said Brother, his resolutiō shalbe pious, or indiscreet. And the Brethren that shall goe among

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the infidels, may in two manners conuerſe with them: Firſt, they may not contentiouſly impugne them, but lett them be ſubiect, not only to the ſaid infidels, but to euery creature for the loue of God; yet confeſſing themſelues alwayes to be Chriſtians. Secondly, that when they perceiue it to be the will of God, they preach his word, to the end they beleue in him one ſoueraigne power, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghoſt, on God in Trinity, and in the humanity of the Redeemer and Sauour of the world, exhorting them to be baptiſed and to liue thence-ſoward in Chriſtianity: becauſe he that ſhall not be borne againe by Baptiſme and the holy Ghoſt, cannot enter into the kingdome of heauen. They ſhall preach to the Infidell people theſe things, and many others, which God ſhall inſpire them: For our lord ſaid in the goſpell: I will confeſſe before my Father which is in heauen, all thoſe that ſhall confeſſe me before men: but the day when I ſhall come on the earth in the Maieſty of my Father, I will deny them that ſhalbe aſhamed to confeſſe me to be the Sonne of man. Lett all the Brethren, in what ſoeuer place they are, remember that they haue already offered their ſoules and bodies to the ſoueraigne God, and that they ought to expoſe and employe them for the loue of him, in all occurrances, and to preſent the ſame to the ennemies viſible and inuiſible, becauſe our lord hath ſaid: he that in this world ſhall looſe his life for my ſake, ſhall finde it ſafe in eternall life, and bleſſed are they that ſuffer perſecution for iuſtice, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen. Lett them alſo call to minde that which our lord ſaith: If you be perſecuted of the impious
Ioh. 12. and wicked, they haue firſt perſecuted me, and if you be perſecuted in
Ioh. 5. one citty, fly into an other. When men ſhall hate you and perſecute
Matt. 5. your name and you renowme and ſhall ſpeake all euill of you for my ſake, and for my loue, reioyce yee boldly: for your recompence therof is great in heauen. And thus much I ſpeake to you (my Brethren) to thed you ſhould not feare thoſe that haue power to kill the body, and with your patience you ſhall poſſeſſe you ſoules, and he that ſhall perſeuer to the end, ſhalbe ſaued.

Of the Preachers.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

THe preaching of the goſpell being the food and nourishment of the ſoule, lett no Brother or Miniſter authoriſe himſelfe and enterpriſe to preach without licence of his Superiours, and lett ſuch as ſhalbe authoriſed, be very reſpectiue not to preach againſt the forme and
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constitutions of our holy mother the Church. Lett the Minister Pro-
 uincials be aduertised not to admitt to any chardge, especially in mat-
 ter of importance, all personnes indifferently, but lett them former-
 ly consider well therof. Lett the Brethren that shalbe admitted to
 preach, or to exercise any other obedience, take heed not to attribute
 to themselves, or to their merittes, the office which they shall haue,
 and particularly that of preaching, they ought rather to practise by
 workes, then by faire elected wordes: and therefore att all times and
 whensoever they shalbe aduertised to desist from preaching, lett them
 without any contradiction entierly forbear to preach. Therfore (by
 charity which is God himselfe) I pray all my Brethren, Preachers, Ora-
 tours, and other Officers and Ministers, as well Preistes as lay, that
 they endeauour continually to debase and humble themselves, and that
 they neither glory nor take complacence in any good, that God doeth
 or speaketh by them: because such work is not theirs, but Goddes: and
 that they remember that which our lord IESVS CHRIST saith:
 Esteeme not the more of your selues, for that you see the deuils subiect
 vnto you; and lett each on rest assured that we haue nothing of our
 owne, but vices and sinnes: and when we finde our selues tempted and
 oppressed with diseases and afflictions, as well in soule as in body, we
 should reioyce in hope of eternall life. Lett vs beware of pride, and
 vaine glory of the wisdom of the world, and the prudence of the flesh,
 which endeauoureth to speake well, but litle to doe well. For it seeketh
 not a religion and sanctity of spiritt, but a religion and sanctity exteri-
 our and apparant vnto men: for these are they of whome our lord
 speaketh, when he saith: I tell you in verity, you haue already your
 reward. The spiritt which is of God, desireth the flesh should be mor-
 tified, misprised, and esteemed vile, and that it endeauour to be hum-
 ble, patient, pure, duly subiected to the spiritt, and especially rooted
 in the feare and loue of God, the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, refer-
 ring all good thinges to the most high: lett vs acknowledge our selues to
 be his, and lett vs continually yeld him thanks, as one from whome
 dependeth and proceedeth all our good. Therefore are all honours, and
 all benedictions due to him alone, by reason also that he is the true and
 foueraigne good: And therefore when we shall see any thing ill done or
 ill spoken against his holy name; lett vs on the contrary endeauour to
 prayle, exalt, and thanck him, as blessed for euer world without end.
 Amen.

Matth. 5.
6.

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Now, and when the Ministers ought to assemble.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

THe Minister Prouinciall ought with all his Brethren to assemble together, euery yeare, att the feast of S. Michael, in some comodious place to treat and determine of matters behoufull for the seruice of God and Religiō. And all the Minister Prouincials that are beyond the sea and in places on the other side the Mountaines, shall assemble once euery three yeares: the other Minister Prouincials shall come euery yeare to the Chapter, in the Church of S. Mary of Angels, if the Minister generall dispose not otherwise, to whose ordonnance all ought to obey.

That all Brethren ought to liue Catholiquely

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

Lett all the Brethren be Catholiques, and as such, liue Catholiquely: and if any one should erre in faith, or in the institution and constitutions of holy Church, either by worckes or wordes, if he doe not forthwith rectifie himselfe, lett him be vtterly expelled out of our Religiō. We ought to acknowledge for our Superiours, all Prelates and Religious in that which concerneth the good estate of our soule, provided that they proceed not against our Order and our Rule.

Of the confession and communion of the Brethren.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

Lett all my Brethren, as well Preistes as the laity, the blessed of God, cōfesse to the Preistes of our Order, and if in case they cannot, they may confesse to an other Preist, that is prudent and Catholique, and lett them firmly beleue that by the penance and absolution giuen them, they shalbe absolved of all their sinnes: and therefore lett them endeaour, with the greatest faith and humility that they can, to accomplish the penance that shalbe enioyned them. And if they should be in a place where they could not haue commodity of a Preist, lett them in such case confesse with their Brethren, as the Apostle saith:

I. 5. Confesse your sinnes one to an other: But let them not yet omitt, when they shall haue meanes to repaire to Preistes, because they alone haue the authority and power of God to bind and loose: Being so contrite
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and cōfessed, lett them with exceeding humility and reuerence receiue the most sacred sacrament, calling to minde that which God saith: he that eateth my flesh and drincketh my blood, hath life euerlasting. An d *Ioan. 6. Matt. 26.*
in an other place: Doe this for a commemoration of me.

Of praying God and exhorting Christians to penance.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

VHen my Brethren shall know and esteeme it expedient to preach to the people, hauig imparted the benediction of God, they may vie these wordes: Feare, loue, honour, praise continually, and say yee: Be thou blessed almighty God, Trinity, and vnitie, Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, Creatour of all thinges: I beleeche thee to permitt me to performe fruites worthy of penance, and to know this truth, that we shall shortly die, and that att that instant the knotte of this soule and body shall end, to be either eternally happy, or eternally miserable. They must exhort such as haue bin offended, to pardon, as God doth pardon vs: and to this effect lett them vnderstand, that if they doe not pardon, they shall not be pardoned, and that they shalbe blessed that shall die contrite, because their place shalbe in heauen, and miserable shall they be that shall die impenitent, because they shalbe children of the deuill, whose workes they haue wrought, and therfore shall they descend into eternall fier. Be carefull my beloued Brethren to shunne all vices, and perseuer in god euen to the end, that God may blesse you.

An Exhortation he made to all the Brethren.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

Lett vs be mindefull of that which our lord sayth; Loue your enemies, and doe good to them that hate you: Because besides *Matth. 5.* what he hath taught vs by worde, he hath in like sort taught vs by effect, whose steppes we ought to imitate. As then he called Iudas his freind, though he knew he would betray him, and voluntarily presented himselfe to them that were to crucifie him: so likewise lett vs repute them our freindes that iniustly afflict vs, that oppose them selues against vs, that iniury vs, procure our vexation, torment and death: and we ought to loue them the more, in that what they doe vnto vs, God vseth them as an instrument: and because what soeuer he doeth and permitteth, though it seeme dif-

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THE XXII. CHAPTER.

Lett vs be mindefull of that which our lord sayth; Loue your enemies, and doe good to them that hate you: Because besides *Matth. 5.* what he hath taught vs by worde, he hath in like sort taught vs by effect, whose steppes we ought to imitate. As then he called Iudas his freind, though he knew he would betray him, and voluntarily presented himselfe to them that were to crucifie him: so likewise lett vs repute them our freindes that iniustly afflict vs, that oppose them selues against vs, that iniury vs, procure our vexation, torment and death: and we ought to loue them the more, in that what they doe vnto vs, God vleth them as an instrument: and because what soeuer he doeth and permitteth, though it seeme dis-

displeasing vnto vs, it notwithstanding auaileth to our saluation, sith by meane hereof we shall purchase eternall life. We ought besides to abhorre and hate our body, when it is pleased in delightes and vices: for so liuing carnally, we estrange our selues from the loue of I E S V S C H R I S T, and make our owne entry into hell; and by reason that by sinne we become loathsome and miserable, and that the concupiscences of our flesh are contrary to our true good, and make vs prone to euill, as our lord saith. From the hart of man proceed euill cogitations, fornications, adulteries, murders, couetousnes, theftes, deceiptes, blasphemies, false testimonies, pride, and the foly of this world, and all the foresaid euils procure and make the soule loathsome, defiled, and refrigerate: we therfore, who haue already forsaken the world, should haue regard to no other thinge, but to doe the will of God, an to take contentment therein. Lett vs haue care not to be like the earth by the way side full of stones and thornes, because as our lord saith, the seed (that is the word of God) which was sowne by the way side, was trodden vnder foote by passengers and destroyed. Hereto are compared those that heare the word of God, but dispose not themselves to vertue, and the deuill incontinently rooteth it out of their harts, least beleeuing they might be saued. They are compared to the stone, wheron the other seed fell, who willingly heare the word of God, and in some sort dispose themselves to doe well: but some affliction befalling them, they are incontinently scandalized, the seed then withereth, because it hath no root. They are compared to thornes, who hearing the word of God, haue their harts alwayes employed on worldly thinges and permitt theselues to be seduced by richesse and auarice, busying themselves in terrestriall affaires, and therfore the seed cannot profit them. But they are like to fertile land, who heare the word of God, and with the hart obserue and practise it, and doe worckes worthy of penance. Lett vs therfore, as our Lord saith, suffer the dead to bury the dead. Lett vs be seriously wary of the slighthes and mischeiuous deuises of the deuill, who seeketh no other thing but to separate our soule from vnion with God by the bait of temporall richesse, honours, and pleasures of the flesh, seeking to become lord and master of the hart of man, employing all his endeauiour to root out of his memory the preceptes of God, and doth striue to blind the hart of man in the desires and cogitations of the world and to confirme him in them, according to the saying of our lord: When the vnclane spirit shall depart out of a

Matt. 11. man, he wandereth through places without water seeking rest. And not finding, he saith, I will retourne into my house whence I departed. And when he is come, he findeth it swept with a besome, and trimmed.

*Matt. 15.**Luc. 8.**Matt. 8.**Luc. 11.*

ned. The he goeth & taketh seuen other spirits worse then himselfe, & entring in theydwell there. And the things last of that mā be made worse then the first. Sith then we are by these speeches admonished, lett vs not procure our ruine and death by disvning our soule from God, for whatsoeuer terrestriall recompense, affaire, or fauour, but lett all we doe, be only for the loue of God. I pray all the Brethren, that being freed and deliuered of al impediment and hinderance, that may trouble them, they make their best endeaour, to serue, loue, and honour God, with a pure hart, and free spirit, in regard that he especially requireth the same of vs: and lett vs so proceede, that in vs may be the residence of his diuine Maieltie, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost, who
Luc. 21.
 faith vnto vs: Pray att all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Sonne of man: he also teaching vs to pray, saith: When you shall pray, say: Our
Matt. 6.
 Father which art in heauen: We therefore must alwayes pray and neuer
Ioan. 4.
 faile therein. Lett vs adore God with a sincere hart, because such adors please the eternall Father and he would haue it so. God is a spirit, and they that adore him, ought to adore him in spirit, & truth. Let vs haue recourse to our Lord, as to the Father and Pastour of our soules, who
Ioan. 10.
 saith: I am the good Pastour, that feed and keep my flocke, euen to the
Matt. 23.
 exposing of my life for it: you are all Brethren, therefore call not your selues Fathers on earth, because you haue but one Father which is in heauen, nor call your selues masters, for you haue but one celestiall Master. If you remaine in me, and my wordes in you, you shall haue and
Ioan. 15.
 obtaine whatsoeuer you shall demaund. And where there are two or
6. & 13.
 three assembled in my name, I am there with them euen to the end of
Ioan. 17.
 the world. The wordes that I haue spoken to you, be spirit and life. I am the way, and the verity, and the life: lett vs then keep the true life and doctrine, and the holy gospell which it hath pleased him to manifest vnto vs, as he sayth: Father I haue manifested thy name to the men whome thou gauest me, and they haue receiued the doctrine which I haue giuen them: they haue knowne that I am truely come from thee, and they haue beleened that thou hast sent me. For them I praye, not for the world, but for them whome thou hast giuen me. Holy Father, keepe them in thy name, whome thou hast giuen me that they may be one, as also we. These things I speake in the world, that they may haue my ioy filled in themselves. I haue giuen them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world: as I also am not of the world. I pray not that thou take them away out of the world, but that thou preserue them from euill. Sanctifie them in truth. Thy word is truth. As thou diddest send me into the world, I also haue sent them into the world. And for them I doe sanctifie my selfe:

L

that

that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not for them onlie doe I pray, but for them also that by their word shall beleue in me: that they all may be one, that the world may beleue that thou hast sent me, and hast loued them, as me also thou hast loued: and thou shalt lett them know thy name, because the loue whereby thou hast loued me shall be in them, and in me together. By the same meane Father, whom thou hast giuen me, I will, that where I am, they also may be with me: that they may see my glorie which thou hast giuen me. I praye all the Brethren in the name of almightie God, to learne the sence of that which is written in this life for the saluation of our soules, and to imprint it with great caution in their vnderstanding, and I beseech God Three and One, to vouchsafe to impart his benediction to all them that teach and learne, and that accord together to accomplish the thinges afore said: and as often as they shall read ouer the same for the good of their soule. I further beseech all the Brethren (kissing their feet) to loue them exceedinglie, and to obserue them. And in the behalte of God and the Pope, I Brother Francis, by obedience haue commanded, and doe oblige, that no man diminish or augment any thing of that which is written in this life and rule, and that neither the Brethren haue any other rule.

The end of the rule of S. Francis.

Of the miraculous approbation of this first rule.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis, determined to repaire with his companions and disciples vnto the Pope, to demaund confirmation of the aforesaid rule, composed and compiled more by the holie Ghost then by himselfe, according to the wordes and sence of the holy Gospell. And did in deed with them attempt the iorney, replenished with exceeding confidence and conducted by God himselfe, who seeing their desire vouchsafed to add more courage to that weak harted familie, who out of their simplicity feared, perhappes, they should not be heard. And out of his abundant clemency he permitted his seruant Francis, in a dreame, to see a tree of merueillous greatenes, comming to the foot wherof, he was by diuine vertue lifted from the earth, and raised euen to the toppe therof, which seemed to bend downe his braunches euen to the ground. Hauing interpreted this vision to be a manifest presage of the fauour which he should receiue of the Pope, entierly filled with a spirituall ioy, he recounted it to his companions.

*A dreame
of S. Francis.*

panions, whome he so comforted, that with exceeding speed they arrived at Roome: where vnderstanding that Pope Innocent the third was at S. Iohns of Lateran, they all repayed thither. But they found him so employed in cogitations of troublesome affaires, that not hauing opportunity to heare them, he dismissed them his presence. These poore people then much disquieted, retired to the hospitall of S. Antony, where they were graciously entertained. But the Pope the night following had in a dreame this reuelation. He saw betweene his feet to grow a litle palme, which by litle and litle so grew, that it became a very faire tree. His holines musing on this that exceedingly amazed him, sought the interpretatiō therof, but the holy Ghost in the end illuminated him, who gaue him to vnderstand, that the palme signified the poore family of Francis, to whome he vouchsafed not to giue audience. He therefore in the morning caused S. Francis to be sought, who was found in the said hospitall, whence he was conducted to the Pope: at whose feet this blessed Father with all his company fell on his knees, and then humbly discovered what he desired of his holines. The Pope seeing him, and considering him with more attention, called to minde what he seemed certaine dayes before to see as he was one night solitarily pensue and heauy with sleepe, by meanes of waighty affaires which then did busly him, which was, that the said Church of S. Iohn was ready to fall, and that there came afterward a poore man, misprised of the world, who so sustayned the same that it fell not. The Pope then Beholding S. Francis, considering the purity and simplicitie of his soule, and in what sort he contemned the world, how much he affected pouerty, the constancy of his firme resolution touching the euangelicall life, which he carryed written about him, and wherein he promised obedience to the Sea Apostolike, the zeale which he perceiued in him towards the saluatiō of soules, the seruour & freedome of spirit for the seruice of IESVS CHRIST, he said in himselfe: This doubtles is the man whome I saw, who with his worckes of example & doctrine shall helpe to support and sustaine the Church of God. Notwithstāding he deferred to graunt his demaūd, by reason that it seemed to many Cardinals a matter rare, and exceeding humane forces & abilities, to keep & obserue a profession of such rigour and pouerty. But whiles they were in the Consistory thus irresolute, the Cardinall Paul, bishop of Sabee named Iohn, a louer of the poore of IESVS CHRIST, inspired of God, publicly vttered these speeches: If we graunt not the demand presented vnto vs by this great seruant of God, as seeming vnto vs a thing strange and ouer difficult, though in deed he requireth only the forme and rule of the euangelicall life to be confirmed vnto him, we may iustly feare to offend our Lord

*A dreame
of the
Pope.*

*An other
dreame
and visiō
of the
Pope.*

IESVS CHRIST, and the gospell: for you know if any one should affirme that some new or rare thing, vnreasonable, or impossible to be performed were contained in the obseruation of the euangelicall perfection and in the vow therof, we should esteeme him a blasphemour against IESVS CHRIST the author of the gospell. The Pope hauing well vnderstood this proposition, he turned to S. Francis, and said vnto him: My sonne, pray vnto God that by thy intercession he discouer vnto vs his holy will, which being knowne vnto vs, we will freely and without any scruple approue thy demandaund. S. Francis vpon this commandement departed, and with his accustomed feruour fell to his prayers, beseeching our Lord that he would be pleased to inspire the Pope to doe what should be most for the glory of his diuine maiestie, and to instruct him what speech he should vse to obtaine that which he so piously required. In this prayer it was miraculously reuealed vnto him what he should say, and was assured that the Pope should condescendingly heare him. Being then ioyfully retourned to the Pope, he sayd, that God had reuealed vnto him this similitud. That a poore woman of right beautifull countenance, and rare conditions, dwelling in the woodes, chaunced one day to be seene by her kinge, who admiring her so singuler beauty, resolved to espouse hir with hope to haue by her a faire and comely generation. And hauing in that sort accepted her, she in short time brought him many children in that desert, to whome being well growne, the mother said: Know my children that the king is your Father, goe yee therfore to the Court, and feare not to conuerse with the greatest, and he will exalt you to a degree answearable to your descent. These children leauing their mother, repaired to the Court, where being arriued and seene of the king, they weere by him with exceeding admiration att their beautie incontinently acknowledged to be his children: yet notwithstanding he demaunded them whose children they were: they answered, their mother was a poore woman, that liued in the vncouth desert. But the king, who knew them before, and made them this demandaund, only to proue the constancie of his children, being moued att length with a fatherlie affection, embraced them very amourosly, and said: Feare not: for if till this day I haue and doe maintaine strangers, how much more reason haue I to maintaine you, you, I say, that are my most deere children? And this affection will I shew to all those that henceforward shalbe borne of your mother my deerly affected wife. Applying which parable, he said: Holy Father, our rule and life is this poore woman, by the mercy of the king of kinges accepted for his elpouse, of whome he hath begotten many children, whome his diuine maiesty neither hath nor euer will faile to sustaine: and

*The parable
which S.
F. vsed
to the
Pope to
persuade
him to
confirm
his rule.*

and as he hath a care to releue strangers, your holines need not doubt but he will also haue regard to maintaine and support his true and legitimate children, that the heires of the eternall king perish not by hunger, who are borne according to his likenes, by vertue of the holy Ghost, of a poore mother, to witt, of the euangelicall pouerty, and nourced with his proper milk. And if the king of heauen promise the eternall kingdome to those that follow him with faith and verity, how much rather will he giue them such thinges as he ordinarily with so bountifull liberality bestoweth indifferently on the good and the wicked? The Pope hauing with carefull attention heard this similitude, and so patheticall and strong argument of the S. he admired and sincerely acknowledged that our Lord IESVS CHRIST dwelled in S. Francis. Without farther delay therefore, and without admitting any other difficulty, he approued his rule, permitted him, with the title of preacher of penance, to preach ouer all the world, and caused litle crounes to be made to all the lay Brethren that were with him. And therupon S. Francis withall his companions made his solemne profession vnder the handes of the Pope, promising to obserue the euangelicall life and rule: and he was by his holines established Minister generall of all his Order, who offered and promised him his assistance when soeuer he should need it. But because this confirmation of the rule was then only made *Vina vocis oraculo*, by the Popes worde of mouth, the year of grace 1209. and the thirteenth of the Popedome of the said Pope Innocent the third, nor hauing no Bulle of this confirmation, therefore the beginning of the Order is not reckoned from that time, but from the time that it was afterward confirmed by writing, which was in the eight yeare of Pope Honorius with an authentickall Bulle, fifteene yeares after this first verball confirmation, as in place and order shall hereafter be inserted.

*Approba-
tion of
the Pope
for the
rule and
life of
the Frier
Minors.*

*S. F. was
made Mi-
nister
generall
of the
Order by
the Pope.*

*How S. Francis returned to Assisum, and how God declared vnto him, that his Order was instituted for the saluati.on.
of the soules of the faithfull.*

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

S Aint Francis exceedingly encouraged by obtaining the so much desired confirmation, departed from Rome towards the vally of Spoletum there to beginne to preach the gospel of IESVS CHRIST, discoursing alwayes with his companions by the way, in what sort they might most perfectlie obserue the profession formerly promi-
lie made. In which discourse hauing spent a good part of their way,

*S. F. and
his Reli-
gious mi-
nisters
raculouf-
ly promi-
sed for.*

and being wearied, they rested themselves in a solitary place, no lesse afflicted with hunger then with trauaile, nor hauing with them any prouision, nor humanely cause to hope after any meanes of releife. But our most mercifull God, who is euer true, and neuer faileth his faithfull, of himselfe provided for them, causing in a moment a man to appeare loaden with bread, who as soone as he had distributed it to those poore of IESVS CHRIST, disappeared and was neuer by any of them seene againe. These poore Religious therfore, acknowledging this grace and fauour to be afforded them by the handes of God, were exceedingly comforted, and there purposed and irreuocable confirmed, neuer to breake that strict and rigorous vow of pouerty for any want of food, or whatsoeuer other necessity or affliction that might befall them: and with this seruour and good resolution, they trauailed through the vally of Spoletum, discoursing with themselves whither it were better for them to dwell in solitary places for their particuler repose, or to conuerse in the world, for edification of their neighbour. Vpon which point S. Francis hauing long time conferred with his disciples (not minding of himselfe to determine in such a case, wherein he would not relie on his owne resolution) he made his prayer vnto God, that touching this point, he would manifest vnto him his holy will, which he knew by this meane. He vnderstood that he was sent of God, to endeaour to gaine many soules vnto him, as Satan sought to robbe him of them, to carrie them together with himselfe into hell. He therfore resolved rather with his companions to conuerse in the world for the profit of manie, then to liue in an hermitage to benifitt only himselfe. Hauing then settled himselfe with his Brethren in a desolate house neere to Alsifium, they there liued conformably to their rule in very simple pouertie, seeming rather to sustaine themselves with the bread of teares, then with temporall consolations. They ordinarily employed themselves in prayer, and especially mentall, because they were not as then furnished with bookes, nor breuiaries, to say their cannonicall houres, and so in supplie therof, they made their exercise in the excellent booke of the life of IESVS CHRIST, meditating therō day & night according to the instructiō that their blessed Father gaue thē: for he cōtinuallie preached vnto thē the crosse of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. And wheras the Brethrē most instantlie besought S.F. to teach thē some forme of prayer, he vsed vnto thē the wordes of our Lord: When you praye, say: *Pater noster qui es in calis, &c.* and afterward, *Adoramus te Christe, &c.* We adore thee our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and we praise and honour thee here, & in all the churches of the world, because by thy crosse thou hast redeemed the

Why they confirmed and iterated the strict vow of pouertie.

God manifesteth to S. Fra. that he would be serued of his Order in the active life:

How S. F. taught his brethren to pray.

the world. He also taught them to praise and honour God, in all creatures, to reuerence preistes, to beleue simply, and to confesse firmly the truth of the Faith, as the holie Catholique and Romane Church beleueeth and confesseth: and his disciples with admiration of his doctrine were attentue vnto him. They fell on their knees when they saw any Church a far of, and there they made theyr prayer, as the S. had instructed them.

Of the admirable vision of a fiery chariott, wheron the glorious S. Francis appeared vnto his disc.ples.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

THe poore colledge of S. Francis was neere to a place called Ri-
uotorto, in an old house, and so litle that they could hardly ac-
comodate themselues sitting one close by an other. From thence
went forth the louer of pouerty to preach pennance and contempt of
the world, first by worckes and then by wordes. But being one later-
day in the euening gone thence, he went with a Brother to Afsisium,
there to preach the lunday as he was accustomed to doe. And to this
effect, he retired into a poore house adioyning to the bishopprick. Being
about midnight in prayer, a fiery chariott of admirable splendour so-
dely appeared to his poore family, which entring att the doore of their
cottage, where some prayed, and others slept, it there turned three ti-
mes: In the middes of this chariott was the glorious Father S. Francis,
and ouer him a circled cloud and bright as the sunne, the splendour
whereof gaue light to the obscurity of the night; and then those that
slept by meanes of the noyse did awake, & the bodyes of the Bretheren
were so illuminated and resplendant, that their consciences were dis-
couered each to other: and att lenght they mutually seeing each others
hart, perceined that S. Francis though absent in body, was present in
spirit: and that by a supernaturall vertue he appeared vnto them on
that fiery chariott, to insinuate vnto them that they ought to follow him
as true Israelites, sith as an other Elias, he was by the prouidence of God
deputed to be their chariott and guide. It is credible that our Lord att
the prayer of S. Francis, opened the eyes of these simple seruantes, that
they might see the maiestie of God, as he did, when he opened the eyes
of the seruant of Elizeus, to lett him see the mountaine full of ar-
med men, of fiery chariottes, and of Angels that were there to pro-
tect the Prophet. So that the S. incontinently rerourning, began
to penetrate their hartes and to comfort them with this strange vi-
sion, discouering vnto them diuers extraordinarie and admirable
thinges

4. Reg. 2.

4. Reg. 6.

thinge of the augmentation of their order and explicating vnto them many thinges that euen exceed humane vnderstanding. Which gaue the Brethren to vnderstand, that the holy Ghost was really discended and with such perfection remayned alwayes in him, that he was vnto them, & to all the faithfull the securest way they could possibly haue, wherby to procure their saluation.

How S. Francis went to dwell at our Lady of Angels.

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

The bishop and canons of Alsifium deny a place to S. Francis to lodge him and his. An Abbott of the Order of S. Benedict doth accordate the monastery of S.

THis holy Pastour of a flocke litle in number, yet great in merites, determined to leaue the said place, as well by reason that it was not capable conueniently to lodge them, as also because they were there exceedingly disquieted, he therfore said to his childrē: My deerly beloued, I know that God will multiplie vs, it therfore seemeth necessarie that we repaire to to the Bishop of Alsifium, or to the Canons of S. Ruffinus, or to the Abbott of S. Benedict, to begg of them some poore Church, where we may read the canonicall houres, & neere vnto it, some poore cottage built of loame and laughtes, wherein we may be all couered and haue what shalbe necessary for vs: by reason that this place, as you see, is not capable to entertaine many Brethren, besides the inconuenience, which to vs is more intollerable, that the strictnes therof doth not afford vs meanes to read our canonicall houres, nor lesse to burie on of our company, if any chaunce to dye here. The Brethren approued these considerations. Repairing then to the Bishop, humbly to demaund his necessitie, he receiued answere, that he had neither church, nor house for him. The Canons answered as much: taking leaue therfore of the, he went vp to the mount Sabusio, to a monasterie of S. Benedict and demaunding for the Abbott, he presented the same petition, relating vnto him the answere and deniall of the bishop and Canons. The Abbott hauing attentiuely beheld him, inspired of God, with a generall consent of all his Religious, gaue to S. Francis and his disciples, the Church of S. Mary of Portiuncula, which was among all other the poorest they had: but the same that S. Francis especially desired, and to whome and to his the Abbott said: My brethren, vnderstand this: We graunt all that you haue demaunded vs, but in recompence, we require that, if God giue you grace to multiply, as we hope, the cheife of your religion haue his residence in this place. Wherto S. Francis, hauing graciously thancked them for their exhibited fauour, answered that the place which they had bestowed on them, should be as they desired the principall of his Order. S. Francis hauing

hauing obtayned this request, tooke his leaue, and retourned exceedingly satisfied, as well in regard that the said church was dedicated to the most holy Virgin, by whose merittes he had receiued many graces of God, and hoped yet many greater, as also, because it was surnamed Porticella, of the place where it was built, which was ancientlie called in latin Portiuncula, that is, a litle portion, the true figure of the religion which he professed to obserue, which was the strictest and most painfull life that in all the holy church was obserued, and that of all other was to haue the least part in this world. The holy Father vpon this occasion said, that God would not that the first Brethren of the Order should build an other church, to the end the foresaid prophesie might be accomplished by the Frier Minors, who were to persist in the perfection of Euangelicall pouerty, to encrease and multiplie ouer all the world. And notwithstanding, (as I said before) the said Abbott and his Religious had entierlie giuen him the said church, without reservation of any acknowledgement, S. Francis neuertheles, as a louer of pouertie, a good and prudent Founder, that would establish his religion on a strict and sharpe pouertie, did yearlie send and giue to the said Abbott, a litle baskett full of small fishes, which he tooke in a neighbour riuer, as a note, not onlie of humilitie, but also of acknowledgement, that his brethren might vnderstand that they had nothing in propriete, sith they paye euen for the permission of the Church, for which they gave the said fishes, which were in great reuerence and deuotion receiued of the said Abbott and Religious, and in recompence therof was giuen them a vessell of oyle. The poore of IESVS CHRIST being thus accommodated in the house of the glorious Virgin, there began incontinentlie to breath forth the sweete sauour of their vertue, and not only in the vally of Spoletum: but euen in diuers partes of the world: by reason that S. Francis went from thence to preach in diuers places, not with wordes of terrestriall, humane, and artificiall science, but by vertue of the holie Ghost; and that with such merueilous efficacie, that his audience admired him as celestially, because he most ordinarilie fixed his countenance on heauen, seeking and endeavouring to eleuate and raise the creatures from the earth to their Creatour.

*Mary of
Angels is
cheife of
the Or-
der of the
Frier Mi-
nors.*

*What vñ
S. Fra.
gaue for
the mo-
nasterie.*

Of the augmentation of the Brethren, of the conuersion of Brother Siluester, and how S. Francis cured Br. Maricinus. and conuerted him to his Order.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

How
much the
preach-
ing of S.
Fr. did
proffitt.

THe holy seruant of God being with his disciples in his new residence, in extreame austeritie of life, most zealous exercise of prayer, and seruour (both by example and doctrine) of the salvation of soules; the worthy vigne of IESVS CHRIST began to sprout forth new buddes, to branch, and produce odoriferous floures and sauourous fruites of vertue, and respect towards his diuine Maiesty. For there being many conuerted and enflamed in the loue of IESVS CHRIST, they bound themselues with strict and new lawes of penance, following the rule and holy counsaile of the blessed seruant of God. Others, not only touched with deuotion, but inflamed with a holy desire to imitate him, did tread his holy steppes, and concerning the contempt of worldly vanities, and earthly appetites, did chole him for their guid: and following the spirit, they in short time augmented to such a quantity, that they enuironned the whole world: One of the first that then came was the blessed Brother Siluester, the twelue Disciple who was the first preist that entred into the Order: he was of Alsium, and the manner of his conuersion was thus: He was present when Brother Bernard Quintaualle by helpe of the S. distributed what he had to the poore. And seeing with what liberality he gaue his mony to the poore his auarice therby encreased and therefore he spake to S. Francis, to pay him the residue for the stones which he had deliuered him, to the building and restablisshing the foresaid churches. But the S. admiring this demaund without making any reply, thrust his hand into the purse of Quintaualle and gaue him a handfull of mony, and then asked him if he were satisfied, or would haue more: wherto he answered that he would no more but was contented. And being retourned to his house, and finally perceiuing the diuelish couetousnes, that had blinded him, he sharply reprehended and checked himselfe, and exceedinglie commended the seruour and liberalitie of Brother Bernard, and the sanctitie of S. Francis, and as well in regard of this light of conscience and true knowledge of him selfe, as that God had already elected and predestinated him to this new life of perfection; he had shortly after a strange dreame three seuerall nightes together. He saw in a dreame the citty of Alsium enuironned with a mighty and hideous dragon which seemed to intend the destruction, not only of the said citty, but also of all the country neere: He saw also to proceed

A vision
of Bro-

out

out of the mouth of S. Francis a faire and lardge crosse of gold, the toppe wherof touched the heauen, and the armes therof stretched euen to the two endes of the earth, att the sight of which crosse this venomous dragon fled. For that time he spake not a word of this dreame, because he did not perfectly beleue: But considering that the Pope had confirmed the rule of S. Francis, whose perseuerance also in sanctity of life and doctrine admiring, he recounted vnto him this vision: and hauing afterward distributed his goodes to the poore, he tooke the habitt of the Order of the said S. with whome he liued so piously and with such obseruance of his rule, that of his part he verified what he had seene. There was att that time one of the Order called Cruciferi who are Religious wherof there are many in Italy, the greater part being gentilmens: they are cloathed in violet, and perpetually carry a crosse of siluer in their handes) his name was Mauricius who was greiuously sick in an hospitall neere to Alsifium: where being dispaired of and abandoned by the Phisitions, he reposed all his hope and confidence in God, and by message vnto S. Francis, of whome he had a right good opinion, seriously besought him, that he would vouchsafe to pray to God for him. Which the holy Father hauing done, he incontinently tooke crummes of bread, which he steeped in the oyle of the lampe, that burned before the image of the virgin Mary, wherof he made a new kind of oyntment, which he sent to the sicke persō by two of his Brethré saying vnto them: Carrye this Medicine to our Brother Mauricius, whereby God shall not only restore him to perfect health, but shall dispose him also to be his seruauant in our company. It so came to passe: for hauing taken this medicine, he was instantly cured: it was not confectioned by any worldly apoticary, but of the vnction of the holy Ghost: And the said drogue wrought such forces both in his body and soule, that he afterwards became a Freer Minor, and was cloathed with the habitt rather of a beggar then of a Religious, in such sort was it patched, and also with a shirt of maile against his flesh. In that manner did he liue for many yeares, neither drinking wine, nor eating bread nor any thing dressed by fire: but contented himselfe with the only nourishment of hearbes, pulse, fruites, which extreme abstinence neuer distempered his body, but was for diuers yeares preferred in health and strength sufficient to support the labours and wearisomnes of the Order: for which, after his death, God, by his merittes wrought many miracles.

*ther Sil-
uester be-
fore he
was reli-
gious.*

*S. Fr. tel-
leth that
Maurice
should be
a Freer
Minour
and cu-
red him
of a def-
perat di-
sease.*

How Brother Leo, Br. Mace, Br. Pacificus, with others, entred into the religion of S. Francis.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

*The first
infringer
of the ru-
le of the
Frier Mi-
nors, as
an other
Iudas att
leight
did hang
himselfe.*

IN short time after entred into the Order this said Brother Leo, who was confessor to S. Francis. Among manie vertues wherewith this Brother was endued, there appeared especially one, which the said S. exceedinglie prized, to witt, an Angelicall simplicitie, in fauour wherof he was verie familier to S. Francis, and did participate of all his secrets, and therfore the said S. did often call him, Brother Beast of God. Brother Maceus of Marignan, did also enter into the said Order, he was a famous Courtier, and for his prudence exceedinglie honoured of the world: he obtained of God, grace to edifie much by his pious discourses: and therfore did S. Francis often take him for his companion: and when any came to visit him, they were so entertained with the worthy discourses of Br. Maceus, that S. Francis was not interrupted of his prayer. Brother William an Englishman made himselfe also of the Order, who was of so pious a life, that he merited to be one of the first twelue disciples of the S. in place of Brother Iohn Capella who was one of that number: but being the first that participating in the habitt, transgressed the rules, he was chasticed of God by the soares of leprosie, which correction not receiuing att the hands of the infinite bountie in such sort as he ought, being moued with rage he grew into such furie of impatience, and the deuill so blinded him, that running out of the Religion, he as an other Iudas hung himselfe. Now this child of perdition being rased out of the nōber, the said Brother William was subrogated in his place, who was a man of such perfection, that whē he died, God shewed by manie notable miracles, how pleasing and gratefull the merittes of so worthie a seruant of his was vnto him. Brother Ruffinus was a verie rich gentleman of Alsium; neere of kinned vnto S. Clare: who being exceedinglie edified by the conuersion, life and doctrine of S. Francis, was also conuerted, and att this time tooke the habitt. He perseuered a virgin and pure in religion, as he entred into it, which proceeded of the fauour and grace of God. He was verie deep in contemplation. Brother Pacificus did afterward enter into the Order in this manner: Being a very famous Poett, he was interiourlie affected by the Emperour Frederick the second, who with his owne hand crowned him with laurell, and entituled him the Prince of Poetry. But as the merittes of the vertues of the holie Father S. Francis did augmēt, and the most pleasing fauour of his sanctitie was spread in diuers places, diuers being moued and induced with so singulera vertue, went from

*How
Brother*

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from the Court of the said Emperour, where he was with a generall admiration so much prayd for a great mispriser of the world, expresly to see him: Among others Brother Pacificus, then a famous poett and Courtier, conceiued a desire to see and heare him: and therefore he attempted a iourney to find him, which he did, when he least thought therof, at the towne of S. Seuerin within the limites of Ancona, where he saw the said S. miraculously crossed with two glittering swordes, wherof thone reached from his head euen to the middes of his feet: and the other a crosse from the left hand to the right; by which vision, though he had neuer seene S. Francis, he notwithstanding instantly knew him, and was then by God conuerted to the change of his profession, to abandon the world, and to vnite himselfe with him, as well in that he had bin touched by the wordes of S. Francis, as transpeced with the sword of the holy Ghost that issued out of his mouth. Hauing then misprised and renounced the vanities of the world, he incontinctly adhered to the said S. with a firme purpose to follow him. Which the holy Father preceiuing, who by the spirit of God vnderstood that his conueision was perfect and enterly chaunged from the inquietudes of world, to the peace and tranquility of IESVS CHRIST, he gaue him the name of Brother Pacificus: This man perseuering in the seruice of God, merited att an other time to see the holy Father S. Francis with the great Thau (which is a Greek letter made in forme of a crosse) painted on his forehead with such liuely colours, that they cast as it were a diuine light vpon the face of the said S. Att the very same time Brother Geniprus entred into the said religion: he was a man endued with profound humility and patience, as in his life appeareth.

Pacificus miraculously entred the Order of the Frier Minors.

Of Many others that entred the Order, and of one whome S. Francis would not receiue.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

Brother Iohn a man of deep simplicity, was about that time admitted after this manner. It happened that S. Francis goeing to preach in a church, and finding it foule and very vncleane, he swept it himselfe. The report then incontinctly ran through those quarters, that S. Francis was arriued in that village, whervpon out of a great deuotion that the people bare him, many repayred thither, and among others the said Brother Iohn, att that time a very simple man, who being at his labour when he vnderstood of the comming of the S. least his oxen, feild and plough to goe to see him, and was one of the first that came vnto him, whome he found sweeping the said church,

and therefore said vnto him: Brother giue me this broome, I will as-
fist you, and taking it out of his handes, he ended the sweeping of the
church. S. Francis loone after perceiuing the affluence of people there
present, because he preached to each ones great contentment, he reti-
red himselfe, and the said Iohn insinuating himselfe vnto him, said:
I haue for many dayes had a desire to serue God, and since I haue
heard spoken of you, this my desire hath exceedingly encreased, but
I knew not where to find you. Now sith it pleased God that I haue
this day mett you, I am resolu'd to accompany you and to follow
your commandements. The holy Father perceiuing his quality and
good purpose, and exceedingly reioycing in God to vnderstand that
by reason of his great simplicitie he should proue a good Brother,
he thus answered: My Brother if you desire to obserue our rule,
and to conyoin your selfe with vs, it is precedentlie necessarie that
you deprive your selfe of what soeuer you haue in the world, and fol-
lowing that which the gospell doth counsaile vs, that you distribute it
vnto the poore: for all those of mine that could, haue done the same.
Which this good and simple Iohn hauing heard, he returned to the
place whence he came from his labour, and loosing an ox from the
plough, he brought it to the S. and said: I haue for so many yeares serued
my father and his house, therefore though this be a very iclander
recompence, I will neuertheles, for the portion of mine inheritan-
ce, content my selfe with this ox, which, as mine I will giue to
the poore, or will dispose of him as to you shall be most pleasing.
But as the holie Father and he consulted together what should be
done with this ox, his kinred hauing notice that his resolution
was to leaue them, came all where he was, and did there so bitterlie
lament, that the S. conceived great compasion theratt: and for
their consolation he said: Prepare some thing speedilie to eat and
weep not, for I will recomfort you. So they went together to one
of their houses, where they did eat with the S. who after dinner,
addressing himselfe to the Father of the said Iohn, said vnto him:
you ought not thus to disqui'tt your selfe for that your sonne hath
a desire to serue God, but rather ought you to reioyce theratt and
to giue thanckes to IESVS CHRIST, who is content to be ser-
ued by one of your blood: by meane of this your sonne Iohn, you this
day gaine all our Religious to be your children and Brethren. And he
being the creature of God (whome to serue is to raigne hath) now ma-
de choice to serue his Creatour. But that, in this his seruice of God,
you remaine not vtterly discomforted, I will that in regard of your po-
uerty he leaue you this ox, whereas according to the gospell he ought
to giue it to other poore people. His parentes did then shew themsel-

ues

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ues much comforted, especially in regard of the oxe he left them, for they lamented him as much in respect of their pouerty, as their sonne did of charity. By this meane S. Francis gayned his Brother Iohn, as Elias did Elizæus, retiring him from temporall labour to the perfect labour of the vigne of God. And because the S. exceedinglie affected pouerty in himselfe and in others, being once cloathed, he euer after tooke him with him for his companion: which so augmented in him this his simplicity of hart, that whatsoeuer he saw the S. to doe, the same he sought to imitate. For if he saw him in prayer, he would seeke some place where he might easily obserue him, to conformance himselfe vnto him euen in his very gestures, so that if S. Francis were on his knees; or standing vp right in prayer, or prostrate with his face vpon the earth, or if he held his handes ioyned together on high, if he sighed, if he spert, or coughed, Brother Iohn would doe the like. S. Francis once reprehending him for it, he thus answered: I haue promised to God to doe what soeuer I shall see you doe, and therefore I must endeauour to conformance me entierly vnto you: The holy Father admired and together reioyced to finde him so constant in his simplicity, by meane wherof he so much att lenght profited in all other kind of vertues, that all the other Brethren held the perfection wherto he arriued in great admiration. But by reason that the world was not worthie of so pure a conscience, God afterwarde called him to himselfe. After his death S. Francis with great ioy recounted vnto his Brethren his holy conuersation, and called him not Brother Iohn, but S. Iohn. It happened about that time, that S. Francis preaching in the prouince of Ancona, there came one day after sermon a man vnto him, that said, he would leaue the world and dwell with him; to whome S. Francis answered: If thou desire to enter into this order, goe first and accomplishe the saying of the gossell: Sell what thou hast, and giue it to the poore. He then incontinently went and distributed all his goodes amōg his kinred, being herevnto moued rather by passiō of the flesh, then deuotion of the spirit: and then returned to S. Francis, to whome he said: Father I haue forsakē all that I had. The holie Father demāded of him in what manner he had disposed thereof: and he replied that he had distributed it amōg his poore and needy kinred. S. Francis then knowing that this man had not any seruour of spirit, said vnto him: Brother Fly, sith thou hast giuē thy goodes to thy kinred, gett thee home, and alke no more to liue of almes with my poore Brethrē. So this wretch returned alone to his kinred, as vnworthy to liue with so manie perfect seruātes of God. Many others inspired by the supreme boūty and with an exceeding seruour of spirit daily entred into the Order: the renouwme wherof was spread ouer all Italy, yea through all Christedome. By reaso that S. Francis sent his

Reli-

3. Reg.
19.

Meruei-
lous sim-
plicitie of
Br. Iohn.

Br. Iohn.
after his
death cal-
led saint.

Matth.
19.

Seculer
almose.

*Representa-
tion of
a Chri-
stian life
by the
Br. of S.
Francis.*

Religious into diuers partes of the world, who represented the life of IESVS CHRIST by holy pouertie which they carried in steed of purfes, by obedience wherein they were most prompt and ready, and trauaile, whereby they were speedie in their iorneyes: and in regard that they had nothing, they feared not the losse of any thing. Thus liued they euery where without feare, and in great tranquility of spirit, without care either by day or night, as they had bin instructed by him that is the only, true, and singuler Master. They kept not the remaynes of one dayes meat for the next, being of beleefe that to endure want of these temporall and transitory benefittes, was their great richesse and abundance.

In what exercise and beleefe he fashioned his Bretheren.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

SAint Francis knowing that his religion was instituted of the holy Ghost in the church of God for a mirrour or looking glasse, wherein sinners might behold and contemplate their deformitie, and how far different and distant they are from the liknes of God: he for this respect endeaoured to annoynt his Brethren with the vnction of IESVS CHRIST, by whose vertue he begatt them. So then being replenished with the holy Ghost, his Order did not only encrease in number, but in vertue also and edification of the faithfull: and to the end that besides their deuotion they might also be exercised in charitie, and loue of their neighbour, sith they were piously to couerse in the world, he would often louinglie sitt downe with them, and in the name of God command, now one, then an other, to make some exhortation of that which the holy Ghost should dictate vnto him; and this he practised often. And one time of all other, they, whome he had enioyned to speake, did all deliuer such excellent and admirable thinges of the bounty and goodnes of God and of his secrettes, and this vnpremeditated only by the vertue of obedience, that themselues grew into admiration therof. He then by experience knew that which God said to his disciples: It is not you that speake before Presidents and Princes, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. Now whiles these holy, pure, and simple vessels, did poure out the baulme of diuine grace, discoursing of very high matters of God, and discouering the deepe mysteries of the scripture, by vertue of obedience vnto their holy Father, our lord IESVS CHRIST appeared vnto them, and stood in the middes of them in forme of a most beautifull yong man, and gaue them his benediction with such a sweet and immensue grace, that S. Francis and his

Matth.

*Our lord
Iesus
Christ
appeared*

his Brethren were rauished in extasie, and fell all in a sound and as dead to the ground. Being retourned to themselues S. Francis said: My dearly beloued Brethren, we are much obliged to be thankfull vnto God, for that it hath pleased his diuine Maiesty, to manifest his treasure by the mouth of the simple, and to appeare vnto vs to lett vs know that he was present, and that when it pleaseth him, he maketh the mouthes of infantes, of the simple and mute, to appeare right eloquent. These seruantes of God thus replenished with so great a light of diuine grace, S. Francis sent them to illuminate the world, and att their retourne they all repayed to our ladie of Angels, as their true mother, and there they enioyed againe each others sight with an extreame contentment, which so filled them with a spirituall exultation, that they easilie forgot the labours and contradictions which in their trauailes they had endured. The other Brethren that stirred not from the Couent, though sometimes they were employed in manuall labours about the necessities of their house, neuertheles, the cheifest part of their exercise was in prayer, for they very frequentlie prayed with seruour and teares. They arose att midninght watching to pray to God for themselues and for all other sinners. They had a very tender and mutuall loue to each other. The holy Father serued them as a mother doth her only sonne: charitie so burned in them all, that it seemed very easy vnto them to spend their life, not onlie for the loue of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, but euen for the safty of one of their Brethren.

*to. Saint
Francis
and his.*

*Greater.
hour of
the first
Freer
Minors.*

Two Brothers walking one day through the feildes, they mett a foole, that cast stones att one of them: which the other perceiuing, he stept before his companion to receiue the strokes of the stones. These good Brethren did such and the like thinges, being induced therto out of perfect charity. They reuerenced one another, as masters, and he that by his office, or age, was amongst them the principall, would appeare the most humble and abiect: they exercised themselues in obedience, each of them being prepared to performe, not only the precept, but euen the will, of his Superiour. They vndoubtedly beleened that whatsoeuer was commanded them was the will of God, and by that meanes obedience was easy and pleasing vnto them: that they might not be iudged by others, they accused and condemned themselves: and if any so much forgatt himselfe as to vtter a scandalous word to one of his Brethren, he would conceaue such remorse and greife theratt, that he was not well, nor could repose, till he fell att his feet whome he had offended: to whome, with demand of pardon, he acknowledged his fault, and herewith not content, he would pray the Brother offended to sett his foot on his mouth, and tread

*Notable
chastice-
ments for*

*inconfi-
derate
words.*

hard vpon it: In this manner chastifising themfelues, did they fuppreffe and trample pride vnder foot. This was not praftifed only among the fimple Brethren, but among the Superiours themfelues: For in what-foeuer place one found himfelfe to haue with out reafon offended any Brother, he commanded the offended to fet his foot on his throat, that by this meane the malice and tyrannie of the deuill being fuppreffed, loue and fraternall charity might be conserued among them. They alio armed themfelues againft vices, and exercifed vertues: befide this, they vfed their habites, bookes, and other moueables in common, that none among them might prefume to call any thing mine. And albeit they were in deepe degree of pouerty, they were neuertheles in their hartes exceeding rich and moft liberall, and very freely and ioyfully gaue what was demaunded of them, for the loue of God, fulfilling his word, who faith. Giue that Gratis which you haue receiued for nothing. If any poore people begged the almofe which had bin giuen them, they gaue it them. He that had not what to giue to the poore that alked him an almofe, would giue them part of the habitt that couered him. When the rich of this world came to vifitt them, to conferre with them of fome spirituall matter, they ioyfully entertayned them, and delighted fometime to frequent their company, fo to finde occafion to perfuade them to leaue their finnes, and to induce and moue them to doe doe pennance, When their holy Father was to fend them into the world, they would instantly, and as a finguler father, craue of him not to fend them into their owne country, therby to auoyd the conuerfation of their kinned and freindes of this world: becaufe this feemed vnto them a certaine kinde of retourne to the world. For what foeuer neceffity that might befall them in their trauaile, they took neither gold, filuer, nor other kind of mony, becaufe they fingulerly condemned it, and aboue all thinges, did from their hartes tread it vnder foot.

Being fo freed and exempted of all wordly defires, they numbred themfelues with thofe of whome Ifai faid: how beautifull and fwift are the feete of the Euangeliftes, and preachers of peace, and eternall Saluation? Thus did thefe true Religious, circuit the world, by the ftreight and sharpe way of their pouerty, furmounting the hard ftones of felfe defires and euill inclinations, breaking the thicke cloudes of the finnes and depraued customes of worldly men, with great paine of their life, walking on the thornes of tribulations and contrarieties, with exâples, vertues, and doctrine, of pennance: becaufe fuch is the path way that leadeth them to liue who with a perfect refolution feek the fame. The holy Father did alfo exercife his children in hauing care of leapers, fo to plant in their foule a firme root of humility and mortification of themfelues:

Ifai. 52.

Rom. 10.

*S. Fr. fo-
licitous of
the lea-
pers.*

themselves: and therefore ordained his Brethren to be at the hospitall of leapers when occasion required, to serue and minister vnto them. If any Gentilman presented himselfe to be receiued into the order, among many things propounded vnto him, one of the principall was, that he should serue leapers, and dwell in their house when he should be commanded: considered withall that S. Francis himselfe did the same with much contentment of body and spirit, and with him all his beloued and holy Religious. And in regard that the holy Father was very zealous of the honour of the most blessed Sacrament, he would that not only the altars, but euen the churches and house of God, were conuenient, neat and well ordered: and if he found any one vncleane, he would sweepe it himselfe, or if he could not, he would commaund some Brethren to make cleane and accommodate the same, that by this worck of God they might nourish in themselves humilitie, 2. Cor. 6. a reuerence to his diuine maiestie, and seruour of spirit, to enrich with him, the conscience of all the soules of faithfull Christians, which are the true temples of the liuing God.

*S. F. care
of the
churches.*

Of the doctrine and documents of S. Francis.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis did often make spirituall lectures to his children in IESVS CHRIST, putting them in mind of their profession, and the state whervnto God had so graciously called them, which he performed by these wordes: My welbeloued Brethren, lett vs haue alwayes before our eyes the first vocation wherto, with so great mercie, we haue bin called of God, not only to saue our selues, but also for the saluation of many. And sith it is so, lett vs trauaile ouer the world, with good example and behoufull wordes exhorting and teaching every one, that sinners may repent their sinnes past, and call to minde the diuine preceptes, which they seeme to haue already forgotten. Now whiles you thus trauaile, you ought to haue a firme faith that God will procure you to encounter faithfull men, gentle and gracious, who will of charity receiue you ioyfully, and you shall gaine them. When you shall meet with vnfaithfull and proud personnes that shall resist your speeches, support them with patience and humilitie, for the loue of him, who being iniuryed, misprised, and dishonoured by the Iewes, did not answere them one crosse, word, nor would reuenge himselfe of the outrages which they had done him, but presented himselfe with an extreme charitie to support all, in satisfaction of our sinnes.

*Instru-
tions of
S. F. vn-
to his Br.
going
through
the world
1. Pet. 2.*

When S. Francis sent his brethren to any place, he gaue them this document. Haue alwayes humility and honestie in your company, and in the morning till the third hower, keepe silence strictlie, and in the meane while offer your deuotion and pray to God in your hart. Vtter not wordes that are idle and without fruit, neither doe you giue eare vnto them: because in whatsoeuer place you walke or be, your conuersation ought to be no lesse humble and modest then if you were in your oratory or cell, sith that where soeuer we goe or be, we haue alwayes with vs our cell which is our body, wherof our soule is the hermite, which resideth therein to pray vnto God and to meditate on his benefittes. And therefore if the soule rest not in peace in this celle, that of the monastery will litle auaille vnto a Brother: Liue in such sort as no man be scandalized att you: but that each one by your sweetnes be induced to peace, to benignity and concord: considering that to this end we be called, to witt, to cure the wounded, to reduce those that erre, into the right way, and to make vnion where there was diuision, fastening them together with the sweet nayles of the feare of God.

*Why the
Religious
of S. Fr.
were first
called
Freer Mi-
nors.*

He afterward explicated vnto them the state of the Freer Minors, saying: The Religion of the Freer Minors is a nett, that taketh the great fishes for God, and letteth the lesser escape: and the life and religion of the Freer Minors is a little flock and fold of sheep, which the Sonne of God hath desired his heauenlie Father to giue vnto him in this later time, which were a people replenished with humility, and with so abieest apouerty, that they were different from all other, and were content to posses no other thing in this world but himselfe, in regard that his Father had giuen them vnto him. Herevnto he added that for this respect, God had commanded him in a reuelation to call his Religious Freer Minors, because they were the poore people which he had required of his Father, to whome in his gospell he spake in these tearmes: Feare not my litle flock, for it hath pleased the Father to giue you the eternall kingdome. And albeit this hath bin vnderstood in the person of all the poore of spirit: yet was it particularly spoaken concerning the Religion of the Freer Minors, who were to renew in the church the primitiue estate of the Apostles. Thus did the holy Father encourage them, without feare to trauaile ouer the world, securely to denounce, and simplie to preach pennance, reposing their confidence in God who had vanquished the world, who would speake for gayning of soules for them and in them, by meane of the holy Ghost. But lett vs especially haue care, said the holy Father, we that haue already abandoned the world, that we loose not the celestiall kingdome, for a matter of small moment; I therefore further aduise

aduiſe you, that if you find mony in any place wher ſoeuer, you eſteeme it no more then the duſt you trample vnder your feet.

The ſaid S. did afterward admoniſh them not to contemne any perſon, that they ſhould ſee to liue licentiously or cloathed ſumptuouſly: conſidering that God is our common Lord, who is of ſufficient power to call and iuſtifie them. For which reaſon he would that his Religious ſhould yeld them equall reuerence with their fellow Brethren and Lordes: for they are as well and really their brothers in regard of reaſonable eſſence, ſith we are all creatures of one ſame and ſole Creatour and Redeemer, and they are alſo their Lordes, in as much as they aſſiſt them in their courſe of life and releiue them in their neceſſities. He farther affirmed that the Freer Minor ought to be ſuch in the world, that in whatſoeuer he ſhould ſee or heare in the world, he ſhould gloriſie the heauenly Father. The Brethren one day beſought the holy Father that he would be pleaſed to maniſeſt vnto them what vertue would make a man the greateſt freind to I E S V S C H R I S T, and he anſweared them: My Brethren, pouerty, my Brethren, pouerty, my Brethren, pouerty. Know for certaine, that it is the ſinguler way to perfection, the ſtemme or ſtock of humility, and that God would that therevpon ſhould begin the ſtructure and building of perfection, ſaying: If thou wilt be perfect, goe and ſell all that thou haſt: becauſe therby, the greateſt impedimentes are cutt off, to witt, the affection and cogitations of temporall ſubſtance (ordinarily accompanied with pride) and vaine glory of the world, which breed of richelſſe, as the moth engendreth in cloth. Our Lord alſo declareth this eminencie of pouerty, to be the ſeat of all other vertues, when he ſaith: He that will liue with me, lett him renounce himſelfe, and take vp his crolle and follow me. Becauſe he that is perfectly poore ought not only to forſake all loue and deſire of temporall thinges, but alſo the loue of himſelfe, of his proper iudgement, of his prudence, and of his owne will: that hauing no propriety in any thing, he may enter into the merueillous puiſſances of God, and preſent himſelfe nakedlie into his ſweet embracements. In the diſcourſe which S. Francis made to his Brethren, he did alſo commend in a Religious the vertue and grace of prayer: affirming that without the ſame none could perſeuer or profit in the ſeruiſe of God: he therfore exerciſed and induced his Brethren to prayer, by all meanes he could deuife, perſuading them to pray alwayes, trauailling or reſting in one place a broad or within, in comfort and affliction, and that they ſhould doe al thinges with their ſpirit erected vnto God, who is alwayes preſent in all places and within vs, and will that we continuallie conuerſe with him, for feare that by our negligence and tepidity, we deprive our ſelues

*The Freer
Minors
ought not
to con-
temnenor
condemne
any man.*

*What ver-
tue was
moſt re-
commended
by S. Fra.*

Matt. 19.

Matt. 10.

*Prayer
ſingularly
recomen-
ded by S.
Francis.*

telues of the veritie of his holy Spiritt, not receiuing it with due reuerence.

Of the austere life of S. Francis.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

THe blessed Father knowing that he was giuen of God, for an example and light vnto the Gentiles and worldly Christians, & that many by his meane, carrying the crosse of our Redeemer, should be saued, as a captaine of the warre of IESVS CHRIST, he endeaoured to gett the crowne of victory by worckes of perseuerance in perfection: and reflecting on these words of the Apottle, *Galat. 5.* They that appertaine to IESVS CHRIST, haue crucified their flesh, with their vices also, to carry the armour of God in their bodies; he crucified his flesh with the rigour of discipline, and so bridled his appetites, that touching his refectiō, he scarcely tooke what was necessarie to suffice nature. And as one that had well experienced the matter, he affirmed it to be a thing verie difficult, to satisfie the necessitie of the body, without obeying the disordinate inclinations of sensuall delight. In the beginning of the Order, albeit he had not sufficient almose of bread to releiue his Brethren, yet for the most part he demaunded no more, because himselfe and his Brethren were so attentiuē and addicted to the Spiritt and to prayer, that out of forgetfulness they omitted to demaund almose, and therefore refected themselues with hearbes and rootes, which they did eate with exceeding good appetit, and great contentment. The holy Father in his health did very seldome, or almost neuer eate any meat dressed by fier. His ordinarie repast was bread and water, and if att any time he did eat of such, it was of boyled hearbes, which he so mingled with ashes or cold water, that loosing their sauer, they were worse then raw, and drinking water, he took only so much as he thought would suffice him, not to quench the heat of his thirst, but to satisfie the necessitie of his body. His ordinarie table was the ground, neither had his Brethren other during his life. He euerie day inuēnted and found some extraordinary manner of abstinence, so attentiuē and regardfull was he to chastice the flesh, and to render it obedient to reason, that it might not hinder the profitable progresse of the soule.

S. F. and his Religious during his life did alwayes eate on the ground He deuided the yeare into diuers Lentes, all which he fasted austerelie, and first, the Lent which our Lord, tasted which beginneth

neth from the Epiphanie, this great seruant of God fasted it in the honour and example of IESVS CHRIST, very secretly with great silence, and very strict abstinence of bread and water. Then, incontinently after Easter, he kept an other Lent, to solemnise the feast of the holy Ghost, in which he prepared himselfe in example of the Apostles for so great a comming. An other he made in honour of the Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul: an other from the feast of the said Apostles, to the assumption of the virgin Mary. After this Lent, he fasted till the feast of S. Michael the Archangell. Besides the foresaid Lentes, he very austerely fasted the Aduent: He left it as a precept to all his Brethren to fast it, from the day after the feast of Allaintes, according to the same forme of the quality of meat which himselfe vied.

*The Lets
which S.
F. fasted
every ye-
are.*

Touching the rest of his austere life, it may be conceaued by that, which he said of himselfe: I was neuer theese in demanding almoste superfluously: yea I haue alwayes taken lesse of that which I needed, thereby not to frustrate other poore: because if I should haue done otherwise, I should haue condemned my selfe of manifest theft. Notwithstanding when he trauailed he did accommodate himselfe to their diett who gaue him entertainment in their house, according to the gospel, in such sort that both fasting and eating he alwayes edified his neighbour. If in his sicknes he were constrained to eat flesh, from the time of his recouery he would for penance double his ordinarie abstinence. In regard wherof, Brother Giles would commonly, say, that if S. Francis had a body sound and stronge as he desired, all the world together had not equalised him for sufferance and patience in austerities. But because the merite and noblenesse of vertue consisteth not only in the party of the body, but of the spirit: therefore by how much his bodilie force did faile, so much were the seruours of his spiritt reformed, so that they exceeded without comparison, his naturall forces, and that was his great crowne: And therefore appearing one day to Brother Giles, and telling him that he desired to speake foure wordes vnto him, he answered and said, learne first with thy selfe that which thou wouldest say to me. Besides, the bare & hard ground was the ordinary bed of this poore, wearyed, and trauailed body, and his pillow was a stone, or a peece of wood: yet did he ofte sleep sitting, in respect wherof his body had very small ease & repose in his sleep: for he spent the most part of the night in prayer: Wherto he arose whiles the other Br. slept, whē he was with thē. His habit was one only coat, with the capuce of very rude & boysterous cloth, and sometimes breeches and the corde. As he hated delicate cloathing, so did he extremely affect that which was rude

*What
poore are
theenes.*

*Discretio
of the S.
Matt. 10.*

*How he
slept.*

H. habit.

and

Matt. 11. and rough, saying: that S. Iohn was for that exceedingly praised of God, in these wordes, that the custome of delicate cloathing is in the Courtes of Princes, and not in the houses of the poore: If therefore the holy Father felt any complacence in his habitt as being neat or whole, he would incontinently quilt it within with grosse threed. He affirmed that he knew of certaine that the diuels did admire att the obseruance of a difficult and austere life, and that on the contrary, they violentlie tempted those that were cloathed delicatelie.

*A graue
answere
of S. Fra.*

Being one day demanded how he could endure the sharpnes of winter in so poore and simple habitt; he answered courageously: If we were cloathed within with the flame of God, we should most easily support this cold without, and greater then ordinary if it shall happen. But because he knew that all his Brethren were not capable of the like sufferance, he said that the true seruant of God ought to gouerne himselfe with much discretion in his drincking and eating, and in the vse of all other thinges necessarie to the entertainment of the body, and in such sort that he gaue it not occasion to murmur, that it hath not strength, not only to pray and labour with the rest, but euen not to stand on foot, and when he shall haue done that, if the body doe afterward play the iade, become lazie and drowisie when it should pray, lett him rudelie chastice it, and therefore he ought in all his necessities to haue alwayes recourse to his superiours and humbly demand them: And if he doe not obtaine them, he ought to beare it patiently for the loue of God, who also prayed

*S. F. Was
not so ri-
gorous to
his Bre-
thren as
to him-
selfe.
Psal. 21.*

Matt. 26.

*Necessity
volunta-
rily sup-
ported is
a kind of
martyrdo-
me.*

his Father and was not heard; and lett him vndoubtedly beleue that a necessity voluntarily suffered for the loue of God, is reputed vnto him as a martyrdome: and if his body be therby endomaged, the fault is not his: but it is the will of God. Notwithstanding these so milde documents for others, he subdued his one body with an incredible rigour: in regard wherof some few dayes before his death, he of conscience, asked it pardon for hauing so rigorously treated it: and alleaged for excuse, that he had not done it out of hatred vnto it, but for its greater security, and for the glorie of God.

*Of preserving the treasure of chastitie, and how he afflicted himselfe
and cast himselfe into a pitt full of snow.*

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

THe blessed Father liued with an extreame rigour and sharpnes of discipline, to conserue the virginall splendor of chastity, very diligently enflaming the interiour and exterior man. For this cause in the beginning of his conuerfion, he often times, during the winter season, cast himselfe all naked in the middes of snowes or on the ice, that he might perfectly subdue his domesticall ennemy the flesh, and conserue the shining robe of immaculate virginity, from the fire of sensuality, not permitting it long residence therein, as by this example shall appeare. Being one day in the hermitage Lautiauo, making his prayer in a celle apart, the deuill called him thrise, saying: Francis, Francis: to whome thoughe the S. answered, yet knew he not who called him. The deuill then said vnto him: there is no sinner in the world whome God doth not pardon if he conuert himselfe: but he that shall kill himselfe by ouer rigorous pennance, shall neuer finde mercie before the face of God. The holy Father then knew the deceit of the wicked ennemye, hidden vnder the sweetnes of those wordes: and he knew it the more apparantly, in that att the same instant by the loathsome breath of that foule dragon, which enflameth the coales of hell, he had a vehement temptation of the flesh: which the louer of chastitie feeling, he discloathed himselfe, and with his corde very sharpelie beate himselfe, saying: Goe to, Brotherasse, this kindnes I must shew thee, it is requisite that thus I serue thee to make thee know thy selfe: and sith chasticementes and stripes doe please thee more then fasting and austeritie of life, thou shalt surely haue it (consider here the habitt of religion, which signifieth sanctitie, it was not permitted to fence to steale it away.) And if thou desire to be gon, get thee now thus whipt whither thou wilt. Going then forth of his cell, he threw himselfe on the snow, and incontinentlie made seauen boules of the snow which he sett before him, and said: behold, my bodie, the greatest of these boules is thy wife, and these four are two daughters and two sonnes which she hath conceived by thee, and the other two are a man and maid seruant that are to serue thee, take them now and gett them cloathing, for they faint with cold. And if this new sollicitude be troublesome to thee, content thy selfe to serue one sole master, who is much more easy to please then this flesh. Thus was the deuill confounded, the temptation crossed, and the holy Father was in such sort victorious, that the deuill durst no more to visit him with the like tentations.

The Deceit of the deuill to weary firme resolutions
Iob. 41,

Strange mortification of S. Fra. against a carnall temptation.

By this so generous act of resistance against the flesh he left to his disciples, a documente and example to resist sensuall temptations, not only by prayer, but also by corporall labours, with rigour and asperitie, accompanied with abundance of teares, and not deliciouslie as the worldlie and carnall would gladlie doe, and without any labour that might be any way troublesome, nor much lesse with cold purposes rather then actes of the will, wherein certaine spirituall personnes that are tender and delicate place their force and knowledg. Wherefore it is not to be admired, if they be alwayes feeble and imperfect, because they shall euer proue such, whiles they omitt the corporall exercise of the vertues, and of the steppes of their spirituall Father and master. To the end therefore that this example might profit vs, God would that whiles the Seraphicall S. was employed heerin, a Brother that was in prayer saw and heard all that passed, by reason that the moone did shine: which being perceaued by the holie Father, he recounted vnto him the cause, which was the temptation, but with commandement, not to discouer it to any person of the world, during his life.

Of the guard and vigilancie he taught to be had of our senses.

THE XXXIHI. CHAPTER.

*S. Fra.
Would
not that
his Bre.
should
frequent
or behold
Women.
Ierem. 9.*

Saint Francis did not only teach how one ought to mortifie the vices of the flesh, and to bridle our sensuall appetites, but also with what care one ought to guard the exterior senses, by meanes whereof death entreth the into the soule, to the end that the Brethren might keep more securely the inestimable treasure of chastity, though in so brittle a vessell of earth: he did verie dilligently admonish them, and did prohibite them the amitie and conuersation of women, which hath bin oftentimes the ruine of many. He assuredly affirmed that through the like occasiōs the weake man doth fall, and the strong is weakened. It is as difficult for a man that is no more then perfect to preserve himselfe from these things, as to walke and goe bare-foot on burning coales without burning. For this cause, he kept his senses so retired and sequestred, and particularlie his eyes from beholding the vanities of the world, that, according to what he one day said, he scarce knew any woman by sight, because he affirmed that it was not verie secure to imprint in his memory the image of a figure that might make greater the least sparckle of sensuality, mortified by the ashes of penance, or to admitt and yeld vnto it any thing that might afterward staine the purity and splendour of the chaste soule: and therefore it is not

to be admired, if he attained to such perfection of chastitie, considering that he made such cruell warre against his senses, that it seemed he had obtayned a perfect and soueraigne dominion ouer his flesh, and, in imitation of an other Iob, had made a compact with his eyes, that he would not only haue in horreur the sight of thinges perilous, but euen of such as were vaine and curious. He admonished his Brethren, that it was not expedient for them to giue care to the speeches of women, whereby the soule of the vertuous becommeth effeminate and feeble, excepting in confession, and when it shalbe necessary, to giue them some breife instruction for the good of their soules. What occasion may a Brother haue, said he, that may force him to frequent women, vnlesse when he is required to heare their confession, or to discourse with them touching penance, or to giue them some counsaile for the benefitt of their soule? A man that presumeth of ouer much securitie hath lesse regard of his enemy, who hauing power to surpris him doth not spare him. Thus did the holie Father loue and desire in his Brethren aboue all thinges, next vnto the foundation of holy pouertie and humilitie, modestie and mortification of the eyes; to giue them therefore a more apparant instruction how to gouerne them, he once vsed vnto them this parable.

Iob. 32.

There was a potent and iust king, that sent two pages one after an other to deliuer a message vnto the Queene his wife: the first retourning to the king his master, made his answere simplicie, because out of modestie he had forborne to behold the countenance of the queene his mistris: the second page making his answere to the king, commended the beautie of the Queene, saying: Verilie, sir, the Queene is the most beautifull and pleasing woman that is vnder heauen; and in truth you ought to repute your selfe happy in hauing such a woman to your espouse. The king hearing this said: How hast thou dared, thou lewd fellowe, so vnchastly to behold my wife? thou hast couered the purchase of what thou so attentiuely hast beheld. Thereupon he presentlie recalled the other page, of whom he demanded what his opinion was of his wife, he answered: Syr I esteeme exceeding well of her: for she gaue a very willing eare to what I desired in your behalfe. The, king replied to this discreet answere, and said: hast thou obserued her grace, dost thou thinck there can be any thing more desired or added to the beautie of her countenance? The page answered: Syr it appertaineth vnto you to iudge of that. My duetie was to deliuer her my message and to bring you the answere. Which the king vnderstanding, thus ordayned, and said: it is most probable that thou who hast bin so chaste of they eyes, wilt proue more chaste

A parable which S. Fran. vsed to his Brer. touching mortification of the eyes.

of body: thou therefore shalt be of my chamber, and especially favoured. But as for this presumptuous brazen-face, I will that he be dismissed for feare of committing further mischeife. S. Francis hereof inferred, that the Brethren beholding a woman ought to esteeme and be persuaded, that it is this same Queene, the espoule of I E V S C H R I S T, and themselves to be the first page. And in this manner he very clearly demonstrated vnto them by his life and doctrine, the virginal purity wherein God did alwayes conserue him in the middes of worldly vanities, and that he had such speciall care therof, that he deserued to haue the sacred woundes of our Redeemer engrauen on this his pure and virginal flesh. Wherof Brother Leo gaue testimony, who notwithstanding that he was his Confessour, being curious to be confirmed therein, did neuertheless in his prayer demaund the same of our lord I E V S C H R I S T, who by diuine reuelation ascertayned him therof: for he shortly after saw the holie Father in spiritt on a high mountaine in a most beautifull garden; among roses and lilies, hauing his hands full of them. He was hereby aduertised, that what he saw on this mountaine was the saint registred in heauen with the virgines, not only of body, but euen of spiritt and will.

How the holy Father taught his Brethren to shunne idlenes.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

HE a bone all other thinges taught, both by doctrine and example, that idlenes ought to be shunned, as a principall cause of lewd cogitations, and corrupter of vertue: shewing by example of his life, with what diligence one ought to exercise the flesh by fruitfull mortificatiō, in regard that it is addicted to sloath, and is rebellious. And therefore he called the body little asse, as one that ought to be subiect to the ordinary supporting of the burdens of labours, not making resistance, and that it ought to be chastised with stripes, and nourished with very course and rude meates. If by chaunce he saw any loitring and idle person, that would eat of an others labour, he said that he ought to be called Brother Fly: because, not doing any good, but distayning and hindering the good workes of others, he ought to be reputed contemptible and abominable.

In the beginning of the institution of the order, to giue example of exercise vnto his Brethren, he traualled alone to seeke almes, wherein he extremelie laboured his body that was already very sickly. He spent the night in watchinges and continuall prayers, and the day in reading the office, in seruing and preaching in the townes and villages, or in administering

ministring to leapers, or decking and triming the churches. It succeeded afterward that many Brethren, who were not fitt to keep the quire, did liue of the labours of others, as of Brother Giles, Brother Gini-
pero, and some others who were employed in certaine profitable occupa-
tions, to shunne the capitall ennemy of the life and soule: thence it
proceeded that they had sufficient almoe for themselves and for others.
Neither would he permitt his Brethren to giue care to newes and rela-
tion of seculer matters, that they came not, by omitting the contem-
plation and tast of celestiaall thinges, to employ themselues in vaine
and worldly thinges, which they had already abandoned. It was not
permitted to any of them to relate what he heard abroad. All they that
were nere S. Francis, were aswell by night as day exercised in diuine
prayles: wherein they rather seemed Angels the men. In this sort did they
maintaine the schoole of the holy Father, in labour and exercises of
the spiritt. Among the said Brethren it was held a great sinne, for one
to take his recreation and pleasure in any other thing then the consolati-
on of the spiritt. The holy Father affirmed, that the negligent and
sloathfull that applyed not themselues to any exercise, should be incō-
tinently vomited out of the mouth of God. And if he mett with any
such, he would incontinently reprehend him, as one that by his exam-
ple of perfectiō was in continuall exercise, to the end that in his schoole
none should loose any part of so great a benefitt as is time, which is
giuen vs by our lord IESVS CHRIST.

Apoc. 3.

After his refection he accustomed with his Brethren to vse some ex-
ercise, to auoyd idlenes, that when afterwarde they were to pray, they
might not, by meane of their vnfruitfull wordes then vttered, loose the
giste and recompence which they had merited att the handes of God.
So, the more to shunne idlenes, he gaue this rule, that by his comman-
dement all the Brethren that should vtter any idle word conuerting or
trauayling together, should be obliged to say one Pater, and to praise
God in the beginning and end to the benefitt of the soule of the culpa-
ble, cōditionally that he first acknowledged his fault before he were repre-
hēded by others. But if he were first admonished and reprehēded by an
other, the said Pater noster should be for the soule of the reprehender.
And if the culpable would not admitt the admonitiō and penāce, mayn-
taining his speech not to be idle, the holy Father ordayned, that he
should be obliged to redouble the said penāce, and now to say twice the
Pater noster, once for the reprehēder, and once for him that should iudge
his worde to be idle or vnprofitable. Now the prayles which he orday-
ned to be said before and after the Pater noster, he would they should
be vttered with such and so distinct a voice, that it might be vnderstood
of all the Brethren there present, who should then be silent to heare the

*The re-
creations
of the
Freer
Minors
which S.
Francis
ordayned
them.*

the prayse of God: and if a'ny one then spake, he should in like manner be obliged to say Pater noster for him that was to praise. He would that all the Brethren entring into any house or other place: and casually meeting one another, should prayse God, saying God be prayfed, or some like wordes. This Seraphicall Father was accustomed to giue these honoures to God with a most zealous feruour, and desired that all his Brethren should be carefull and religious in doinge the like.

How he was enemye to murmuringe, and how he reprehended it.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father extremely abhorred murmurers, the venomous fruit of murmures growing of the pestiferous tree of idlenes, yea he shunned them aboue all other kind of vicious personnes, affirming them to haue a most mortall venime in the topp of their tongue, wherewith they empoysen men both present and absent. Wherefore hauing one day heard a Brother offending the reputation of another, he tourned to Brother Peter Catanio, and crying with a loud voice, he vttered these wordes: Discorde, beginneth to enter into religion, if detractours be not chasticed with discipline, and if these loathsome mouthes be not stopt, the sweet odour of the good, will incontinently be infected. Arise, arise speedily, and diligently examine the matter: and if thou finde the offended Brother innocent, chastice the murmurer sharply, that he serue for an example to all others. And so I will that all Gardiens and Ministers be verie vigilant, that this pestiferous infirmitie take not root in religion. To this purpose he often said, that whosoever did frustrate his Brother of his glory and fame, merited to be deprivied of the habitt of the order, and of all power euer to lift vp his eyes to God, till he had to his power restored the honour taken from his Brother. He further affirmed, that the crueltye of detractors exceeded that of murderers, in regard of the law of IESVS CHRIST, which is not accomplished but in charitie, and doth more oblige vs to desire the good of the soule, the of the body.

In this respect the Brethren from that holie time, as obedient children, that desired to accomplish the iust will of their Father, were with their best industrie warie therof, because to murmure, what other thing is it (said the same holie Father) then with the gall of dishonour and treason to fill holie religion his true and deere mother? Such murmurers are of the cursed race of Cham: for as he discovered the auditie of his Father, so these discover and aggravate the

the defectes of their Superiours and of the Order. Therefore they deserve the malediction of God, they wallow in filth like hogges, and seeke to lay false imputations on their Brethren, and to make them like vnto themselves, who haue their consciences exceedingly defiled and loathsome, their office is conformable to that of dogges, to bite, to bark, and to complaine of the order of the Superiours and of the discipline. The voice of the murmurer is thus: I want perfection of life and true knowledge, I cannot attaine to tast the sweetnes of God, and therefore I cannot find place neere his diuine Maistie, nor repose with men. I am resolved what to doe, I will raise discord among the elect, and the good people, and I shalbe fauoured of the principall, so much the rather because I know my Superiour to be a man, and that also, as I doe, he sometimes vseth this meanes. Oh wretch: thou feedest already on humane flesh: why seekest thou not their food other where? thou gnawest the liuer and bowels of those that liue well. Those fellows seeke to seeme vertuous, not to be so, and accuse the vices of others, without indeauouring in the meane time to correct their owne. They praise onlie them of whome they are praised, or of whome they hope some benefit: yet doe they not prayle them, but when they thinke or know it will come to their vnderstanding, and that themselves shalbe commended therefore.

The holie Father thus laboured with all his power to root out of his Order so many occasions of euels as arriue by an vnbridled tongue, to the end his Brethren might obserue the Euangelicall silence. And in that respect he hath att times exhorted them to auoid idle wordes, as such wherof one should render an account, and be punished for, in the great and dreadfull day of iudgement: and if he mett with any one that should forgett himselfe in this point, he would verie sharplie reprehend him: assuring his Brethren, that holie silence was the gard and cōseruation of the purity of the hart, that it was not one of the least vertues, and that so slight regard ought not to be made therof, with the Scripture saith, that death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Matth.
12.

Prov. 18.
& Matth.
12.

Of the spirituall ioy, he would that his Brethren should haue.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

HE had an especiall care that his Brethen in their prayers, diuine offices, and corporall exercises, should euer haue interiorly some spirituall ioy against the venime of idlenes and melācholy, & as a signe that they were the habitatiō of Iesus Christ. He did with all singularly affect in them this peace and alacritie of spirit: he assured them

them that this spirituall ioy was directly opposite to all kinde of deceit and temptation of the deuill, and said vnto them: that if the seruauent of God did labour to conserue in him interieurely and exteriorly the alacrity which springeth of the purity of the soule as his proper fountaine, which is caused by the vertue of prayer, the deuilles cannot annoy him: for they will say, If this man be ioyfull in afflictions and trauailes, by what meanes can we procure him euill? And on the contrary, when the deuill seeth the seruauent of God disarmed of this spirituall alacrity, he hopeth with all to make him loose the tast of prayer, and of all his other good workes, and especially of the puritie of the soule: for he well knoweth with what temptations and by what slights he can endamage and robbe the peace of the spirit, and of the good disposition which is in the seruauent of God. But this mischeuous beast shall haue lesse power, when the soule shall be diligent to expell this heauines by the vertue of prayer, which as a most pleasing odour hath power to chase far a way from her, this fierce and venomous serpent: but when the hart is oppressed with greife and heauines, the deuill reioyceth because he very easily plongeth him into melancholy or into dispaire, or perswadeth it to wallow in worldly pleasures.

Thus did the holy Father exceedingly labour, to preserue the ioy of the hart, which is the oyle of spirituall vnction, wherewith the holy Ghost annoynteth those whom he hath sanctified: and thereby preuenteth the dangerous disease of idlenes and of spirituall distast, which the Sainct with such diligence endeauoured to exterminate, that when he felt it to breed in him, he had incontinently recourse to prayer, as to a most assured remedy and preseruatiue against so perillous a disease. He counsailed his Brethren in like sort when they felt themselues troubled, to haue instant recourse to prayer, and being on their knees prostrate on the earth before God, to say: Restore me, if thou please my God, that grace which thou wert pleased formerly to graunt vnto my soule, whereto I beseech thee to giue that alacrity and tast which it felt in thy holy seruice, and comfort me by the same that I do not perish: and he admonished them thus to perseuer till they were heard, and that their former ioy returned vnto them. For said he, if the soule permitt it selfe to be transported to heauines of spirit, the vice of confulsion of Babilon will grow in it, which rustieth the hart and filleth it with sorrow, if it be not washed with teares. And know yee (said this good Father) that the alacrity which proceedeth of a good conscience and of vnion with God by prayer, is one of the principall giftes which one is to receiue, and receaued ought to conserue. Labour then all of you to obtaine it, sith I loue it for my selfe, and desire it for you, both exteriorly and interieurely for the glory of God, and the greater confusion of the deuill, who

who only and his haue occasion to be melancholie: whereas we on the contrary ought to reioyce in God. I know well that the deuilles beare me enuie, and that they cannot, but against their wil, endure so many graces to be imparted vnto me by his diuine maiesty: and seeing they can not annoye me, they endeauour to trouble my fellow-brethren: but they lesse preuayling therein, if it please God, they shall depart with confusion. If sometimes they tempt me with slugishnes, idlenes, and heauines of spirit, I free me therof, by consideration of the alacritie of my Brethren.

Now it is here to be vnderstood, that the holie Father being an Idea and paterne of all true modestie, he did not meane that one should shew a vaine ioy of speech, or of light laughter: for that is not the alacritie which the true seruantes of IESVS CHRIST ought to haue (as some esteeme) which is but a vanitie and a manifest signe of litle spirit. S. Francis therefore, in an exhortation that he made to his Brethren, declared vnto them, what was the ioy of the true seruantes of God, saying: That Brother may be called happy, who hath not his ioy but in workes and wordes of charity, by example and document wherof men are induced to loue, prayle and honour God. And on the contrary, wretched is the Brother that is delighted in idle wordes, wherewith he moueth men to laughter: in whome, that is verified which the Apostle saith, that his religion is vaine and vnfruitfull. So that by spirituall ioy he meant the seruour, resolution, readines and tast of the will & of the bodye prompt with alacritie to attempt all good: by which seruour and ioy, men are oftentimes more edified then by the very workes they doe, be they neuer so good, if they seeme to be done with an euill will: because they represent the idlenes & anxietie of the will and the sloathfullnes of the body in doing well: so that they doe not edifie, but corrupt. The holy Father affected grauity in himselfe and others, that the ioy of the spirit might not seeme a certaine vaine mirth. He well knew by experience, that this grauity would serue him as a wall against the darts of the deuill, because the soule disarmed therof remaineth light and vaine, and as a naked man amongst potent enemies, that seeke all meanes to murder him.

*What
ought to
be the ioy
of the
true ser-
uant of
God.
Iacob. 1.*

Of the fraternall vnion which he taught his brethren.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

AND because the said spirituall ioy proceedeth of the innocencie of the soule, and of an amorous peace and tranquillitie with God and our neighbour: S. Francis exceedingly laboured, that so holy a vnion might be conserued among his deerly beloued disciples: to thend that they who had ben engendred by the holy Ghost in vnion

P

of loue

Rom. 12. of loue and concorde, might be conserued and maintained, semblably vnited among themselues, in the lappe of their mother, which is holy Religion. To the end also that the said disciples should praise God with one hart, and according to the Apostle should reioyce with the ioyfull, and mourne with the sorrowfull, neuer permitting any roote of sorrow, enuie, or any other disordinate passion to enter into them: and that the greater should be assuredly vnited in a true loue of charitye, with the least, the prudent and wise with the simple, as true Brethren, and they that are in their country with such as are come from farre. He one day proposed to his Brethren an example, to this purpose, of notable doctrine and efficacie.

Supposing, said he, that a generall chapter were held of all the Brethren that are in the glory of paradise, and as there are both learned and simple ignorantes, that haue vowed to serue God, without any science acqrued: lett commandement be giuen to a learned man, and to a simple ignorant to make each of them a sermon, the learned considering what he was to say, thus discoursed with himselfe: where there are so many of perfect knowledge, it would be vnprofitable for me, to appeare learned, my auditours being incapable of further science to premeditate to make election and search of curious and subtile matters, before more curious then my selfe, would appeare ridiculous: but peraduenture I shalbe better and more voluntarily heard, yea and with more fruit, if I discourse simply. Now the prefixed day being come, all the holy Saints assemble in the place deputed to heare the sermon of the Doctour, who appeared cloathed with a rude sack cloth, and his head couered with ashes. Those present more admired this habitt, then the wordes which were compendious, breife and simple in these termes: My Brethren, we haue promised great matters: but greater are promised vs. Lett vs exactly performe those: and tenderly aspire att these. The pleasure of sinne is breife, but the paine therof is without end. The labour of vertue is small: but the glory gotten therby is infinite. Many are called: but few are chosen, and each one in the end shall receiue according to his deserte. These so pregnant and patheticall wordes, did so touch and moue the hartes of the audience, that they were constrained to shed abundance of teares, exceedingly praying this Preacher, and esteeming him a holy person. The simple ignorant then that was also to preach, said to himselfe: Sith this learned Preacher hath made vse in his sermon of my simplicitie, I know what I will doe: I haue some verses of the Psalter by hart, them wil I sett foorth the most eloquently and learnedly that I can, sith that the doctour hath preached like a simple man. The houre of his sermon being come, this simple man rose vp, and replenished with the holy Ghost, he propounded his theme with such

*A breife,
but fruit-
full ex-
hortatio.*

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such seruour, so ingeniously and clearly, yea with such eloquence by the grace which God imparted vnto him, that his auditours filled with admiration, sayd: Without doubt God doth speake in the simple.

Now S. Francis expounded this figure in this manner: Our Religion, said he, is a great and generall congregation, in which are vnited from all partes of the world a great number of men, vnder one same forme and rule of life: The prudent therein ought to make vse of the grace that is in the idiots, which is to be employed in worckes of humilitie, as true disciples of IESVS CHRIST, and so to benefitt themselues therby, when they shall see them exercised, with a liuely intention in celestiall vertues, and voluntarily to heare the mysticall doctrine of the holy Ghost, yea with a pious and holy enuy to resemble them, and to cleare their spirittes of all presumption, that they may be enriched of God, with the spiritt of humility and diuine theologie. On the contrary, the simple ought to be very carefull to make their profit more of workes, then of doctrine and to conuert the science which they see in the learned, into so much fruit, seeing the honour and reuerence which they exhibitt to the rule and to simplicity of life, whereas they being so noble and so learned, might liue in the world as Lordes, and yet they haue made themselues litle, because they had true knowledge of the greatnes of God. Then he concluded that in this worthy concord consisted true peace, in this equalitie of hartes reposed true ioye of spiritt, yea all the beautie and perfection of all their congregation, and that by this only meane they might become gratefull and pleasing to the eternall Father, who as he had engendred them, and alwayes conserued them in grace, would also afterward vnite them, together in glory.

How he accustomed his Brethren to perfect obedience.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

Beside the premises, he also trayned them vp in the vertue of obedience and abnegation of their owne will, alleaging vnto them the example of God himselte, who had no looner made man, but by precept he obliged him to obedience, forbidding him to eate of the aple of the knowledge of good and euill, *Gen. 2. 17.* wherof not eating he did not sinne, but as soone as he had *3.* transgressed his obedience, he condemned himselte and consequentlie vs by the same fact. The Brother that appropriateli to

Ioh. 12.

prīateth to himselfe anything of this tree of knowledge, guided by selfe-will which by the vow of obedience he hath already forsaken, and becommeth proud in regard of his substance already giuen to God, liuing without the yoke of obedience vnto his Superiour, such a one, I say, doth apparantly discover, that he yeldeth to the false persuasions of the deuill, sith he is become a violatour and transgressour of his vow, to eate of the apple of selfe will, and by this meane he resteth condemned and expelled out of the paradise of Religion. For God saith in the gospell: He that would saue his soule shall loose it. Now, that man would saue his soule in this world, who desireth to follow his owne fancie, vnderstanding by the soule, the will which the said Brother ought in such sort to forsake, as that though he could performe such actes as might be better and more behoufull to his soule, then those which his Superiour commandeth him, yet ought he to sacrifice his will to God, and doe only that which his Superiour prescribeth: therefore my beloued Brethren, as soone as you shall heare the first word of obedience, accomplish it without attending an other replie, neither make you any excuse, though the commandement seeme impossible, or that you be not obliged vnto it: for what soeuer is commanded you, although it exceed your power, yet obedience is of it selfe so puissant, that it will giue you supplie of force to effect the same.

*Compa-
rison of a
dead body
to one
truly obe-
dient.*

S. Francis being demanded by his Brethren, what was true obedience: he answered, that one could hardlie finde a man in the world so perfect, that he could entierlie obey his Superiour: and to confirme the same he alleadged an example of a dead man. Take (said he) a dead man without soule and sett him where you will, he doth not in any sort contradict you, he resisteth not, if you chaunge his place he doth not murmure, if you sett him downe he complayneth not, if you leaue him there, he doth there remaine: if you sett him on a bench, he no more loketh vp then downe, if you cloath him with purple, he will not become the more proud: such is the true obedient, that iudgeth not to haue chaunged place, and if any charge be given him, the dignity maketh him not to forgett humilitie: but the more he is honoured, the more doth he esteeme himselfe vnworthy therof. Therefore, though this holy Father, as a good Euangelicall marchant, had by diuers meanes purchased diuine riches, and employed the time present in meriting, yet would he not be superiour, but a subiect: he would not command, but obey: that he might not only leaue vnto his Brethren the quality of a good Superiour, but of a good and obedient subiect also, that may liue a life of continuall martyrdom, when the Prelates are mere libertines. Therefore, when his Order began to multiply, he refused to be Generall therof, and did incontinently submit himselfe

to a

to a Gardian whome he obeyed in all things, as in place proper we shall recount.

He affirmed the fruit of Obedience to be so great, that they who submit themselves thereto, doe not passe any moment without much merit. *Obedience is fruit full.* And therefore when he travailed, he accustomed to promise obedience vnto his companion which he performed, and hereupon sometimes would say: Of all the graces that the diuine goodnes hath imparted vnto me, this is one of the principall, that I would as willingly obey a Nouice of one houres antiquitie, if he were appointed vnto me for Gardian, *Great* as to an old man of sufficient iudgment and prudence: and I would as *submissio* well content me with what soeuer he should enioyne me, as if I were *of the obedience* the meanest of all other: For the Brother being subiect as he is, ought *by Father* not to consider his Superiour as man: but as him for whose loue he is *ther.* subiect vnto him: besides, the lesse worthy of honour the Superiour is, the more pleasing is the humilitie of the obeyer vnto God. Yet did he not forbear as Prelate, to aduertise the Superiours of his Order, that they should rarelie charge vpon obedience, because one should not incontinently proceed with such thundering rigour, which ought alwayes to be the last, when no other meane can auayle: for one ought not vpon light accusation to lay the hand one the sword. Then addresssing himselfe to his Brethren, he would say: He that will not obey with diligence, may be nombred among them that feare not God nor respect men. Now the one and the other of these opinions are true and worthy to be marked, because in a rash man, auctority to commaund is no other thing then a sword in the hand of one that is furious, & there is no thinge more desperate and incurable then a Brother without obedience: in respect wherof the holy Father detested pride as the originall of all kind of euils, and disobedience as the eldest daughter therof. Not with standing he did not reiect the humble penance of the disobedient Brother, when he performed the same, as by the ensuying chapter shall appeare.

What a rash Superiours is.

Of certaine actes of disobedience which the S. chastised.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

THere was presented vnto S. Frâcis, a Brother that had disobeyed his Superiour, to be corrected according to his desert: but the benigne holy Father, perceiuing by euident signes that the said Brother was already penitent, & with great humilitie acknowledged his faulte, he pardonned him: yet to the end his facilitie of pardonning should not occasion others to offend, he caused his capuce to be taken off, and cast into the fire, that it might appeare to all, with what rigour

diso-

disobedience ought to be chasticed: where hauing remaind a certaine time entier, he caused it to be restored to the brother that very humble demaunded it, and the said capuce was seene, not without a generall admiration, without any apparence of burning. It pleased almightie God in one ast to shew two thinges pleasing to his diuine Maiestie, the vertue of the holie Father, and the merit of true penitence.

*Rigour
chastice-
ment of a
disobe-
dient.*

It happened an other time, that the S. Hauing commanded a brother to haue care of a leaper, and to serue him with dilligence and affection, the brother would not attempt the matter: And being afterward demaunded by the holy Father if he had employed himselfe therein, and he vnderstanding the contrary: I thought, said he vnto him, I had vnder my gouernment men dead to the world: but they are yet liuing: Goe therefore you others, said he, to the Brethren, there present, take this disobedient and bury him aliuie. The Brethren attempted the performance of their duety, some of them digged the graue, and others others brought thither the disobedient, who entred into it with a great indignation of spirit and besides his fences; as one that by his disobedience, was already in the diuels possession. He also commanded the Brethren to couer him instantly with earth: but being scarce halfe couered, the deuill, by the merittes of the S. Hauing left him, he began bitterly to weep, saying: The deuill that had hardened my hard, hath now altogether left me: but proceed you bouldly in couering me, for I haue well deserued this death and a more greiuous. The Brethren hearing him, began to weep with him, and some of them aduertised the S. of his conuersion, who commanded that he should be taken vp and brought before him, where being, he said vnto him: Choosethat house you will, wherein you may be comforted, and there shall you dwell vpon obedience: which the Brother hearing, with bitter teares he answered: not so my most gracious Father if you please, but the greatest consolation you can giue me, is that I accomplish my first penance: the holy Father being moued with these wordes, gaue him his benediction.

LUC. 15.

Thus hath he shewen vs by these examples that the end of the chasticement of Religion, ought to be penitence and amendement of the sinner, on whom, if he acknowledge himselfe, chasticement ought not to be inflicted, but fatherlie consolation rather, as IESVS CHRIST hath taught vs in his worthy parable of the prodigall child, who being repentant of his offences, demaunded pardon of his father, and the father very tenderlie embraced him, and with great ioy conducted him into his house.

How S. Francis sent Brother Ruffinus to preach without the capuce in vertue of obedience, and of the penance which therefore he inflicted on himselfe.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

BY this that followeth there appeareth a merueillous order for gouernment: to witt, that the Superiour ought not to command vnto his subiects the thinge that himselfe would nor doe. S. Francis one day called vnto him Brother Ruffinus, whome he commanded to goe preach in the cittie of Alsifium, and to deliuer vnto the people onlie what God should inspire vnto him: but Brother Ruffinus making his excuse, answered: Pardon me if you please, good Father, you know I am not apt to preach, because I haue not any grace in my speech as being too simple and an idiot. Which he spake with much humilitie. And though in deed he had bin a discreet knight in the world, he was, neuertheles so chaunged in himselfe by meanes of the grace of contemplation which he had receiued of God; that he was manie times out of himselfe, and spake verie seldome, and yet that litle was with such difficulty, that he seemed to speake with exceeding paine: but the S. reprehending him for not hauing instantlie obeyed, commanded him further vpon obedience, and gaue him for penance, to goe without his capuce.

The obedient Brother Ruffinus then, without farther contradiction, hauing put off his capuce, and falling one the ground demaunded his benediction, which hauing receiued, he went to Alsifium, and first entered into a church, there to make his prayer: which done, he ascended the pulpitt, and began to preach. The people then assembled, who admiring to see him without capuce, and amazed att such a noueltie, said one to an other: these poore Freers doe such austere penance, that there withall they loose their witts. So whiles this good Brother preached, S. Francis considering the prompt obedience of Brother Ruffinus, and the rigour of his commandement, he began to check himselfe, thus reasoning the matter: What will hast thou gotten, thou sonne of Peter Bernardone, thou of so meane estate, to command Brother Ruffinus, who is one of the principall gentlemen of Alsifium, to goe preach without his capuce? I will make thee to be an example of what thou hast commanded to an other: and speaking thus to himselfe, he hastily tooke the capuce from his owne head, and taking Brother Leo for companion, he went to Alsifium. Being come into the church where Brother Ruffinus preached, the people that saw him without capuce, esteemed him to be likewise foolish, beleeuing that

that the Br. Ruffinus and he were become sottish, by meanes of their ouer sharpe penance: many people therefore flocking thither, Brother Ruffinus in the best manner he could deliuered this speech.

Substantiall sermon of B. Ruffinus in notable speeches. My beloued Brethren, shunne the world, leaue sinne, retourne to the secure way, if you desire to avoid hell, obserue the diuine preceptes, loue God and your neighbour and doe penance, because the great kingdome of heauen approacheth, att least if you will possesse it. But as soone as he perceiued S. Francis he disceded from the pulpitt, to come vnto him: and the S. incontinentlie ascended. The Church was then entierlie full of wordlie people: for some came thither to see the extremitie of that life, others moued with compasfion and deuotion, and others to deride them reputing them senceles: but the holie Ghost that was in S. Francis, caused him to vtter such worthy and merueillous matters, of the contempt of the world, of holie and necessary penance, and of voluntary pouerty, of the desire of the kingdome of heauen, of obedience, of the nuditie, ignominies, and pafsion of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and other like things, which he declared in such manner, and with such seruour, that they who formerlie derided the noueltie of his habitt, and reputed these Brethren to be out of their right senses, did now bitterly weepe, and such was that weeping, and so violent for the compasfion which they had of the death of IESVS CHRIST crucified, and the feare which they conceaued of hell, that they began to crie for mercie, as if it had bin an other good friday (on which day the Pafsion is preached so pathetically in Italy, that all the world cryeth mercie, as one would doe att the lacking of a towne.) Wherefore the people being so edified and contrite, Brother Leo, who had brought with him both the capuces, gaue to each one his owne: & they afterward retourned to their Monasterie, praying God for his great mercie, sith by the vertue of holie obedience, they had obtayned victorie ouer themselues, and manifested how much they contemned the world. They had much to doe to be ridd of the people, that before reputed them for fooles: and now he that could touch or kisse their habittes esteemed himselfe happy. It appeared by the end of this worck, that the beginning proceeded of God, though it were wrought by an excessiue meane as the worcke of the Prophettes, not so much to be imitated, as for a signe of approbation of holy obedience; of mortification of selfe will, and contempt of the world: and that we might know what glorious end God giueth to the worckes of holy obedience, either secrett or manifest, as it pleaseth him.

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Of the loue which S. Francis boare to pouerty.

THE XLII. CHAPTER.

AMong many giftes and singuler fauours which the glorious S. receaued att the bountifull hand of God, one of the principall was that of pouerty, wherby he became a new man in the world, terrible to the deuill, and an example to all mortall people, by the loue and possession wherof, he merited by diuine and speciall priuiledge to haue principallitie in the holie Church. The said S. had this particuler affection to holie pouertie, by confideration how much it was esteemed of the Sonne of God, whiles he conuersed here below, and how it was then banished and expelled out of all the world. He therfore desiring with himselfe to make his residence where holy pouerty was retired, renounced the world, and what soeuer he had proper, he gaue to the poore: and hauing for the loue of God forsaken his Father, his mother, his kinned and freindes, he remayned a perfect pilgrime on earth, to meritt to lodge in himselfe holy pouertie so generallie abhorred. There was neuer auaricious of the world so greedy of monie and so carefull to keepe his treasure, as Saint Francis was to keepe his pouertie, which he alwayes had in his eyes, and in his mouth, as a precious stone and Euangelicall pearle: he dwelt with pouertie, he eat with it, he cloathed himselfe with it, he dreamed of it, breefly he had it alwayes imprinted in his hart, vsing onlie for this life a short coat, streight, and all peiced, a cord and linnen breeches: contenting himselfe neuertheles in this his rich pouertie, he therin perseuered euen to the end, desiring in the same to exceed euery one, as he had learned of it, to esteeme himselfe the least of all. He often represented vnto himselfe the pouertie of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and of his most sacred mother, and practicallie taught it vnto his disciples with great abondance of teares, assuring them that pouertie was the Queene of vertues, in regard that it appeared of such excellent beautie in the king of heauen, and in the Queene his mother. Pouertie, said he, is a principall way vnto saluation, as being mother and nurse of humilitie, and the root of all perfection, whole fruit is of exceeding profit and furtherance to euery one, albeit this verity be very secrett and vnknowne to the men of the world, it is without doubt the hidden treasure, in the Euangelicall feild, the which to buy, a man ought to sell all that he hath: and he that cannot giue his goodes to the poore, ought att least to haue a will to contemne richesse, and to vie violence vnto his proper will and pre-

*Mat. 13.**Mat. 13.*

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sumption: for he doth not perfectly renounce the world, that keepeth his purse full of his proper iudgement and wil.

Luc. 9. Thus discoursing of holy pouerty, he often reiterated the wordes of God: The foxes haue holes, and the fowles of the aire nestes: but the Sonne of man hath not where to repose his head. Then he exhorted his disciples, that as poore people they should build but poore cottages for their residence, where they should remaine, not as in their owne houses, but as pilgrimes, and straungers that aime att other places. *The lawes of Pilgrimes initiated by the Freer Minors.* The law of Pilgrimes, said he, and their reasonnable desire, is to retire into the houses of others during their voyage, concealing neuer to see the hower to arriue in their country, by reason of the great desire they haue to be there, and to passe peaceably without meddling in matters appertaynning to others. He called pouerty the foundation of his Order, whervpon all his edifice was grounded. Therefore he affirmed vnto the that he knew by reuelation, that the true entry of his Religion was this word of I E S V S C H R I S T: If thou wilt be perfect, goe, sell the thinges that thou hast, and giue to the poore, and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen: and come, follow me: In respect wherof he admitted none into his Order, if within the tearme of the yeare of probation they did not forsake what soeuer they possessed in the world. This he caused to be very exactly obserued alwell in regard of the said wordes of I E S V S C H R I S T: as also that none should search in the treasures of Religion for any thing that he had putt there. And if any one demaunded the habitt of Religion not hauing made the said renunciation, he would say vnto him: Get thee hence: for thou art not yet gone forth of thy house, thou hast not forsaken that which appertayneth vnto thee, nor abandoned the feeble foundation, grounded on the sand of affection vnto worldly goodes, and yet demaundest of me the habitt, first accomplish what thou oughtest, and then demaund it. By the said foundation he vnderstood holy pouerty, whome he sometime accustomed to call mother, att other times espouse, and sometime Mistresse.

His exercises for renouncing of the world.

Goeing one day with some of his Brethren towards Sienna, being verie neere the citty, he mett three women, so like in gesture, beauty and habitte that the one could not be discerned from the other, and all three with one voice saluted him saying: Holy Pouerty is welcome: which the S. hearing, exceedingly reioyced: as one that affected nothing more then to be called pouerty of each one, as he was then of the said women, who incontinently disappeared: which being seene and considered by the other Brethren his companions, filled with admiration att such and so vnwonted accident, they esteemed the same not to want some great mistery: and it doubtles was easy

easy to coniecture, that the said three women (or perhaps Angels) did signifie the beautie and Euangelicall perfection of the three principall vowes, Pouertie, Obedience, and Chastitie, which I E S V S CHRIST counsailed to the Brethren, all which did appeare to be equall in the S. in all eminence and perfection.

That he did extremely abhorre mony.

THE XLIII. CHAPTER.

THough he were directly opposite to what soeuer repugned pouertie, he most especially hated mony, and by examples and wordes did often reiterat vnto his brethren that they should shunne it as the deuill. It chaunced that a seculer man hauing done his deuotions in the Church of our lady of Angels where the brethren dwelt, left a peice of mony in signe of almosse, neere a litle Crosse; which a Brother tooke and hid in a hoale of the said Church to giue to the poore. But in the meane while S. Francis had intelligence therof, and the said Brother considered the matter and went and fell at the feete of the S. of whome he demaunded pardon, and offered himselfe to penance. The holy Father hauing well checked him for presuming to touch mony, commaunded him to take the peice of mony where it was, in his mouth and to cast it into the house of office: which the Brother hauing ioyfully and instantly performed, his companions did all admire, and thence forward more contemned mony.

The S. passing an other time by Bary in Apulia, saw a great purse in the middes of the way which seemed to be full of mony: the Brother that accompanied him did exceedingly importune him to take vp the purse being therto induced by a pious zeale to distribute the mony which he beleeued to be therin, vnto the poore. But the holie Father refusing, affirmed, that it was an illusion of the deuill, and that he had no lesse desire to releiue the poore, then the Brother: and further that it was not well done to take an others goodes and to giue it to the poore: and so went on his way. But his companion being yet tempted of the deuill, and persisting to importune him vnder pretence of an indiscreet zeale to releiue the poore: he was att length enforced to permitt him to take vp the said purse, so to lett him vnderstand the illusion: being therefore retourned in the companie of a yong man whome they mett in the way, the holie Father made his prayer, and then bid his companion

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A viper commeth out of a pursethat a Frier Minor would take vp to giue in almosse. to take vp the purse: who being licenced, began to tremble with feare, already feeling the deceit of the deuill. Yet itoooping to take vp the purse, now rather of obedience then of any will he had, being already repentant, and streching out his hand to take hold therof, he law goe out of it a great viper, and in the same instant all vanished, and so the deceit of the deuill was discovered. The said Brother therfore acknowledging his vaine curiositie and confessing his fault to S. Francis, he said vnto him: Behold Brother, mony to a Religious man is no other thing, but the deuill and venomous serpentes.

That he desired that pouerty should shine in all his, and his Brethrens actions.

THE XLIV. CHAPTER.

THe true poore of IESVS CHRIST fought & desired that holy pouerty should appeare in all his actions: and if sometimes he perceaued any one that exteriorly in his habitt seemed poorer then himselfe, he desired to exceed him, and so practised herein with such desire to appeare miserable among the poore, that for feare to be surmounted in pouerty, he firmelie contended withall the world. Meeting a pooreman one daye on the way almost all naked, he said with a lamenting voice vnto his companion: The pouerty of this miserable man procureth vs great shame: for we haue made choice of pouertie to be our great richesse: & I see it appeare greater in this man, & this shame is to vs more insupportable, in that it is now said ouer al the world, that Brother Francis and his companions haue chosen holy pouertie for companion, Lady, Mistresse, and their delightes as well spirituall as corporall, & that they haue so promised to God & men. By these wordes the holy Father desired that the Brethren should make it their esteeme to be poore, and should be ashamed to doe or weare any thing wherein should not appeare the incōmoditie therof: so that he would not haue the beanes or pease watered ouer night for the next morning, desiring to obserue the saying of IESVS CHRIST in the Gospell: Be not careful for the morrow: and he would not that prouision should be made of their food but from day to day: which was long time inuolably obserued in many places of the Religion.

Matt. 6.

A notable speech to his Brethren.

The true poore of IESVS CHRIST said that how much his Brethren should shunne pouertie, so much would the world shunne them, & that they should seeke almosse and not finde it: but if they embraced holie pouertie, as their deere mother, the world would sustaine & nourish the, and acknowledge them as sent for the saluation therof: for the accord
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betweene it and the Freer Minors, is that they shall giue it good example, and that it shall allow them necessarie reliefe: and if they giue not it good example, performing that wherto they are obliged, the world hath iust reason to depriue them of their ordinarie almole. The Bishop of Alsifium said one day to S. Francis, that this his manner of life seemed to him very austere and difficult, considering that he had nothing assured for his maintenance: the holy Father answered him: My Lord, if we had any substance, it were necessary we had also weapons to defend it, for of it would proceed difficulties, debates, matters of selfe loue, and many other impedimentes against obtayning the loue of God, and particulerlie of our neighbour. Therefore we hold it most secure not to seeke the possession of whatsoeuer thing in the world: and we hope that in respect therof, our Lord will permitt vs to be loued and cherished of euerie one.

Of the exercise of pouerty, which is to demanda almole: and what S. Francis and his disciples did touching this point.

THE XLV. CHAPTER.

When the holy Father began to haue encrease of Brethren, considering that God had giuen him so holy a company and so sweet a conuersation, he was exceedingly comforted, and so loued and honoured his children of IESVS CHRIST, that their necessary food failing, he sent not them to the doores to seeke almole, but went himselfe, which he did as wel that they should not be troubled att any thing that might happen, or fearing they might be ashamed to begge, because it was then an vnusuall thinge, as also that the world should not giue them occasion to repent and retourne back, against their holy vocation. He continued this course till the holie wings of the loue of God and so holy pouerty were growne out, wherewith they were able to fly abroad and trauaile ouer the world, to become glorious in the labours of pouerty, the better to sow the seed of the word of God among the people. And although it were very labour-some vnto him so much to begge, yet was it more painfull vnto him by reason of his complexion, because being of a delicate nature, his abstinence and austeritie was an impediment vnto him of supporting this burden. Therefore the number of his Brethren being exceedingly multiplied, he began to see one foot this vertuous exercise of begging. And albeit they were att first ashamed, and that it seemed very hard and difficult vnto them: yet assisted by remembrance of the holy obedience which they had vowed, they found both this and euery other thing very

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easly and pleasant. And then seeing the holie Father so to paine himselfe for them, they prayed him to leaue that labour vnto them. Wherto he answered: My beloued Brethren you should not esteeme it a difficultie to goe seeke almose from dore to dore for the loue of God, but to account it a great fauour of his. For who is he that would not more then willinglie goe to demaund almose, if he saw his Prince and Lord to goe before him, saying with himselfe: What shall the disciple be more worthy then the master, and the seruauant then the Lord? should it not be rather pride then shame? would not such one deserue rather punishment then compassion? Remember that our Lord IESVS CHRIST

*Praise of
begging.*

*Exhortation of
S. Fr. to
his disciples
sending the
to begge.
Psal. 39.*

*That the
Preers
richly
pay their
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ctours.*

that celestially king, of whose mites or crummes (to witt of the bread of grace) the Angels of heauen and the inhabitantes of the earth are maintayned: He, I say, that became poore for our benefitt and example, asked almose, and liued by it in this world. We can neuer walke so strict a way of pouertie, if we haue not first our Lord before our eyes as a begger whiles he liued in this world, and in like sort all his disciples. Thertore he said by his Prophett Dauid: I am a begger and poore, God hath bin careful of me. Goe on then securely after to worthy a Capitaine & guide, to take possession of that inheritance which IESVS CHRIST hath pourechaced vs, and hath left to them that according to his example leaue the world, and seeke to liue in pouertie, onlie for his loue: glorie of this inheritance and preferment, in regard that he hath giuen it only to his beloued. Know that many of the most noble and best learned men of the world shall adhere to our company, who shall repute it a great fauour in this manner to goe aske an almose. Goe then seeke for almose with the benediction of God, and haue a faith and assurance far greater then they who carry with them a quantitie of siluer to pay it at the will of their master, for you pay your benefactours more liberally then any other, though it seeme not so, giuing them for your almose, the loue of God; when you say: Giue vs an almose for the loue of God. But tell me, I pray you, what thing may there be had in heauen or earth, that can equalize the price of the loue of God? The Brethren being by their gracious Father thus induced, went with allacritie to demaund almose into the townes and other places: and being returned to their Couent, they incontinentlie deliuered it to the Father Gardian, who afterward distributed it in common. The said holy Father being one time in the Church of our lady of Angels, a Brother that was very spirituall returned from beging from Alsium, with a loud voice thancking God: S. Francis perceauing him, was stricken with an amorous affection towards him, and went himselfe vnto him, and kissed his shoulder wheron he caryed the wallert, which he tooke off, and layed on his owne shoulder to carry to the Couent,

uent, where he said to the other Brethren: I will that my fellow Brethren doe in like sort seeke almose, and praye God att their retourne.

It happened one day that a Nouice was commaunded to goe to begge, but he refused to goe, alleadging that he should be ashamed. The holy Father vnderstanding it, expelled him out of the Order with these wordes: What? Brother flye, wilt thou liue of the labour of the other Brethren, and rest idle in the vineyard of God, as the drone, who without trauaile seeketh to eat the labour of the bees? The will of S. Francis was, that the Brethren should often goe a begging according to their necessity, that they might meritt; and that being accustomed thereto, they should not be ashamed when occasion vrged them to goe. And so the more noble and the more honoured a Brother had bin in the world, the more ioyfull and content was he and the better edified, as well by this humility as by other seruices of obedience which he performed. Sometimes S. Francis encouraging his Brethren, would vse these like wordes vnto them: My Brethren, we haue bin giuen vnto the world in this latter age that the elect might accomplish in vs the worckes of charitie, to the end they might meritt to be recompenced att the last day of iudgment, with these sweet wordes of our God: I was an hungred, and you gaue me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gaue me to drinke, and as long as you did it to one of these my least Brethren, you did it to me. Therupon the S. affirmed that to begge vnder the title of Freer Minor, was a thing of exceeding consolation and recompence in the retribution of the iust, which forenamed title the master of the Euangelicall truth, particularly specified with his diuine mouth, when he said by his Prophett: Man hath eaten the bread of Angels: for this bread which is demaunded for the loue of God, said the S. is properlie called the bread of Angels, sith his diuine Maieitie by his Angels inspireth men to giue it. Att principall feastes, himselfe hauing leasure would vndertake to begge, to make the feast more solemne in pouerty. Being one time of Easter in a Couent, so far from habitation that there was no meane for him to begge, calling to minde that our Lord IESVS CHRIST, on the like day appeared in forme of a Pilgrime to his disciples that went to Emaus, he demanded almose in the refectorie of his owne Brethren, as a poore straunger, and liued therewith admonishing his Brethren, that passing through the desert of this world as Pilgrimes and straungers, and as true Hebrewes that haue no assured residence here, they should alwayes in humilitie of spiritt celebrate the Pasch of God, which is his passage from this world to his eternall Father in the glory of heauen.

Being inuited by certaine great noble men, to eat with them, he eat nothing there but the almose which he had begged att the dores.

THE XLVI. CHAPTER.

*Being
inuited
to eat
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Cardi-
nall he
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BY reason that he demaunded not almose out of a couetousnes, but only by a liberty of spiritt and a zeale of holy pouerty, for the loue of IESVS CHRIST, therefore did he far more willingly eate of that which he begged and was giuen him att dores, then of what was presented him att table in the banquettes of Princes. When therefore he was inuited by them, before he went thither, he first begged morcels of bread att the dores, which he eat att their tables. Which he did, partlie for loue he bare to holie pouerty, and partly also to giue example to his Brethren. Being one day inuited by the Cardinall of Hostia, who exceedingly loued him, he first according to his custome begged peices of bread, and hauing gott what was necessary, he went to the table of the said Cardinall, where he sodenlie empyred out all the said peices of bread, and laid before him, next vnto whome was the place, of the said Cardinall, who esteemed himselfe as it were braued thereby: yet for the present would say nothing therof. But the holy Father, thincking on what he had to doe, began to deuide his bread into many litle morcels, which he distributed among the noble men that were att the table, who receaued it very deuoutly, some of them presentlie eating it, others kept it for reuerence. Which the Cardinall perceauing with much contentment, was somewhat appeased. Notwithstanding after the refection being retired into a chamber with S. Francis, embracing him and clipping him with his armes, he gestingly said: O simple brother my freind, why hast thou giuen me so great an affront this daye, as coming to eat att my table, which is thine and theirs who appertaine vnto thee, thou wouldest first begge that thou wert to eat? The holy Father answered him: nay I haue rather done you this day great honour, sith that att your table hath bin honoured a greater Lord then your selfe, and one that is your master: besides the subiect doinge that which his Lord commandeth him, he honoureth his master. For God had so much loued this royall pouerty, that he hath vouch-safed to accept her for his espouse, to enrich vs her inheritours together with her, and by meanes of pouerty of spiritt which we shall haue here, to giue vs glory afterwarde in heauen.

Now I neither can nor will omitt to gaine such a succcession, for any apparance of false richesse that may be presented: considering with all that they are of small continuance: and so much more in regard that it is

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necessary for me to make my selfe a forme and example vnto my other Brethren: and besides for that I well know that in this Religion, there are and shalbe many Brethren that shalbe minors in name and effect for the loue of God and by the light of the holy Ghost that teacheth them, with all humility to serue others in their necessity. I know likewise very well, would to God it were not so, that there are and yet shalbe more, such as shall haue no will to humble themselues to aske almosse and to doe other seruile offices, be it either thorough shame 'or by corrupted manners. It is therefore necessary for me to instruct them their duty by workes, to the end that both in this world & the other they be inexcusable before God: and that they may not say, they found none that gaue them example, and so they remaine discharged. Being therefore att this present with you, who are an Apostolicall Prince, and our Protectour, or att other times with some other great personnes, that entertaine me not only with a pleasing countenance, for the loue of IESVS CHRIST; but euen doe sometimes constraîne me to remaine with you: I should not therefore be ashamed to aske almosse, but I rather am ioyfull to receaue it and to follow my God: esteeming it for his loue to be an heroicall act and of dignitie: for himselfe being almighty, would for vs become and make himselfe as nothing. *Phil. 2.*

Now I would haue all my Brethren present and to come to know, that I am better pleased to be att their table, and to see their pouerty, then to be att these your bountifull tables that are superfluous in all thinges: because the bread receaued of almosse, is bread offered and entierly sacrificed for the loue of God, sith the Brother that demaundeth it, saith first, God be prayfed, and then asketh it, in the name and for the loue of God. This said, S. Francis was silent, and the Cardinall was exceedingly edified by the seruour of his wordes, which did spirituallly comfort him.

Of the second exercise of pouerty, which consisteth in giuing: and how S. Francis denied nothing to the poore.

THE XLVII. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father had besides, a most exceeding naturall clemencie and liberalitie, which redoubled the giftes he had of holy pouerty, and the compassion that God had imparted vnto him, which was the cause why he did not only glory in demaunding, but much more in denying nothing for the loue of God. He declared by effect that it is a more happy thing, to giue for the loue of God, then to aske of them that are truly poore of spirit, who possesse nothing

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 thing in proper, but as from IESVS CHRIST and their neighbour: And because the professors of Euangelicall pouerty beganne by this action of giuing all they haue to the poore of IESVS CHRIST, and therby obtaine the estate and title of poore of spiritt, they exercise, perseuer and consummate themselues therein, denying nothing that is in their power, yea giuing themselues, for the seruice of their neighbour, because they who are such, are very ready and content to giue, hauing alwayes in memory the wordes of IESVS CHRIST, which he left as a law vnto his disciples, to witt: Giue, and it shal be giuen you: which wordes are so negligently obserued of Christians, that they may be iustly called inhumane (be they of what estate and condition they please) sith they acknowledge no necessity in others, because they feele it not in themselues. And therefore the poore of spiritt, whosoever they be doe obserue this law: for if they acknowledge themselves in necessity and desire to be assisted, they must assist euery one towards his salutaion. The said holie Father then instituting the true religion of pouertie, endeauoured to teach that the true nature of holie pouerty, did not so much consist in alking, as in giuing any thing that one hath or possesseth, if it be demaunded in the name of God: and this to the end that avarice or cruelty enter not into the house of holy pouertie and of Christian piety. He also taught them in all poore to consider IESVS CHRIST: and therefore, meeting any poore on the way, were he neuer so miserable, he did not onlie giue him (as to the person of IESVS CHRIST) what he had, though it were necessary to the entertainement of his owne life: but he euen esteemed it of right to be rendred as appertaining to the poore party: whereof I will deduce and relate some few examples, of a great multitude which might be committed to writing of this holy Father.

In a verie extreame cold of the winter, a brother of one of the Religious lent him a peice of cloth to vse for a cloake: but meeting a poore old woman, that asked him an almofe, he presentlie putt off the said cloake from his shoulders, and, albeit it were not his owne, gaue it vnto her saying: Hold, sister, make thee a coat of this cloath, in regard that thou hast need therof. She went very contentedlie and ioyfull to her house, and hauing cutt out a coat of that cloath, she wanted yet a litle peice to finish the same: in which case not knowing what to doe, she at length considered the liberalitie of the said S. whome she sought out shewing vnto him the coat cutt out and what she wanted. The holie Father seeing the necessitie of this poore old woman, turning to his companion, Brother, said he, behold the necessity of this poore woman: lett vs for the loue

*S. Franc.
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loue of God endure the cold, giue her thy cloake, to supply her want of cloath, which the Brother incontinentlie performed: so that bycloathing her alone, they both remayned in so cold a season without cloake.

The S. being an other time in the Couent of Cortona, he had a new cloake, which the Brethren had made him: but seeing a poore man that lamented his deceased wife and desolate family; he endeauoured to comfort him: but the afflicted answered, that the occasions of his teares were great and diuers; but that which most afflicted him was, the great chardge of his distressed familie that remayned desolate and forlorne, by the death of his wife. The S. moued with compasion, gaue him his cloake with these wordes: I giue thee this for the loue of God: yet with this condition, that if it be required of thee, thou deliuer it not except thou be payed for it. Now the Brethren that had very latelie before giuen him this cloake, went whence he came, and would haue taken the cloake from the poore man: but he being emboldened vpon the wordes of the S. would not restore it, nor could they euer recouer it by other meanes, but by praying one to redeeme it.

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Retourning from Sienna, he found a poore man by the way and tounring to his companion he said, it is necessary that I giue my cloake to this poore man, because it is his: for it is lent me of God, with chardge to restore it to the first that I mett poorer then my selfe; and this man is much poorer, wherfore if I doe otherwise I shalbe a theefe: and therwith he gaue it vnto him: not withstanding the considerations that his companion alleadged, wherby he endeauoured to persuaade him, that he was bound to satisfie his owne necessaries before an others.

Comming neere to Perusia, he mett a poore man whome he had formerlie knowne in the world, whome hauing saluted and asked how he fared, the poore man with greife, answered, ill: then began to curse his master, that withheld his hire, affirming it to be the cause of his dispaire. The saint exhorting him to pardon it, least he should with all loose his soule, he replied that whiles his dew was retayned, he could not pardon him: The holie Father then putt of his cloake and gaue it him laying: Hold brother, and freind, I giue thee my cloake, for the hire which they master oweth thee, and I require onlie of thee that thou pardon him for the loue of God, and by this worthy act he so mollified the hardnes of this seruants hart, that he pardoned his master.

*Likewise
for the
hire
which a
master
detained
from his
seruants
that cur-
sed him.*

The Phisician of Rieta, that medecined his eyes, one day as he was drelsing him, recounted vnto him, that he in like sort dressed and medecined a poore woman of the same disease, to whome, besides the seruice he did vnto her, he was constrained, out of compalsion he concealed of her miserie to giue her releife. Which the S. vnderstanding, and moued with pittie towards this woman, not so much for her disease, as for her pouerty, he instantlie called the Guardian, to whome he sayd: Brother we must restore that which we haue appertayning to an other: The Guardian admiring, answered: Father what haue we belonging to others? S. Francis replied, this cloake whome we hold as borrowed of a poore woman, to whome it is now requisite to restore the same. Wherto the Guardian answered: Doe as you please. The S. then called a very Religious secular man, and said: Take this cloake, and twelue loaves that shalbe giuen thee, and goe to such a poore sick woman, and tell her that the poore man to whome she Lent the same sendeth it againe vnto her with thanckes, and leaue it all with her, and then retourne. This good man did as the holy Father had enioyned him, but the poore woman thinking that he had iested with her, answered him: Freind I lent not this cloake to any man: so that I vnderstand not what you meane: but the man left the cloake and the bread, without other replie then, it is yours, make vse therof: which the poore woman with thanckes to God, accepted.

Of other like charities performed by the Saint for the loue of God.

THE XLVIII. CHAPTER.

*He gaue
his habit
that was
demaunded
him
for the
loue of
God.*

*Note
that the
loue of*

GOeing one day to preach, he mett two of his Religious, that were French, with whome he a while discoursed. These Fathers being exceedingly comforted both by his life, and conference, according to what they had heard of him, did out of deuotion demaunde his owne habit which he did weare, and that, for the loue of God: whose name he hearing, did instantlie discloath himselfe, and gaue it vnto them, putting on an other which one of them did att that present putt off: which he performed in obseruance of his vow, which was incontinentlie to giue what soeuer should be demaunded him for the loue of God, for reuerence to this Lord, whose will was to be termed, Loue: and therefore he was much offended and sharply reprehended the Religious when vpon any light occasion, and without edification of their neighbour, they named the loue of God, which should not be named but to some good purpose, and that with great reuerence. The S. seldome or neuer weare a new habit: for when he had

Had such one made, he would incontinently chaunge it with some other Religious for a torne one, and sometimes he would take a litle part of some ragged and worne habitt, and as much of an other, and so patching it together, you may imagine what manner of habitt it could be. But he no farther regarded then to couer his stomack that was infirme.

God
ought
never to
be vttered
with
out reue-
rence.

There came a poore man one day where he was, that asked a peece of cloath of a Religious for the loue of God, to patch his garment. Which the S. vnderstanding, he caused euery corner of the house to be searched, and being answered that none could be found, he retired into a corner, not to be seene, and ripped of that which couered his stomack, and gaue it the poore man. But not doing it so dexterously, but that he was perceaued by the Religious, they caused him to restore it. But the holy Father would neither take it nor permitt the poore man to depart, till there was an other peece of cloath giuen him.

Being in the Couent of our lady of Angels, a poore woman that had two children in his Order, came to demaund an almofe, and he called Brother Catanius, to whome he said haue we nothing to giue to this our poore mother? whereto the said brother Peter answered: That there was nothing fitt for her, if not a new testament, wherein they read the lessons att matines which might be giuen her if he thought good, considering that she asked almofe and was in extreme necessity. The holy Father pawfed not long thereon, but sodenly said: I pray you giue it her, for she may sell it, and relieue her selfe in this her misery: and I verily beleue that this charity wilbe more pleasing to God then our lessons: and so it was deliuered her. Few bookes were then printed, in respect wherof they were deere. I haue alleadged this example to shew that this holy Father spared nothing from the poore that asked it for the loue of God. Yea to performe this office of piety, if he chaunced to meet any poore people loaden on the way, he would disburden them, and for a while carry their burden, that in the meane time they might take breath. He would haue all his Religious to honour the poore, as much as him selfe as representing the person of our Lord IESVS CHRIST.

S. Franc.
gaue the
new te-
stament
which
they vsed
att Ma-
tines (ha-
uing no-
thing els)
to a poor
woman.

How much the said S. would haue the poore to be honoured.

THE XLIX. CHAPTER.

Going to preach thorough Italy, he mett on the way a poore sick creature, afflicted with many infirmities, of whome he co-
Gceaued a strong compassion. Then spake of him to his companion, who answered, that it was very true that he seemed poore, ex-
 teriously

How he
punished
a rash
indgement

THE CHRONICLES

teriously, but perhappes was interiously more puffed vp with desires then any of that country. The holy Father very bitterly reprehended him for this rash iudgement, and then sayd: If my company be gratefull vnto thee, thou shalt performe the pennaunce that I shall now enioyne thee. The Religious acknowledging his fault and submitting himselfe to doe his penaunce, S. Francis laide vnto him: Strip thy selfe naked and aske him pardon, and beseech him to pray to God for thee, which was done.

He caused an other Religious to doe the like, for hauing only giuen a rigorous answere to a poore man that asked an almose. He manifested to his Brethren how they ought to behaue themselues towardes the poore in these termes: When you shall see a poore creature, consider that it is a mirour which our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, propoeth vnto you of his pouerty, and of his blessed virgin mother, and that he presenteth it to your sight: When you shall see a sick person, know that it is a paterne of the infirmity which he tooke on him for our sakes: & if the pride and irreuerence of the riche displease God, how much more will displease him the rigorous wordes of Freer Minors to such as make professiō of pouerty? If in this our profession, God permit that we be honoured of great personnes, how intollerable will our pride appeare, if proudly puffed vp, we contemne such as are as poore as our selues? Lett vs therfore beware that by iust permission of God it happen not to our confusion, that the rich make lesse esteeme of vs, yea that they suffer vs to die for want of releife.

*What
profit
may be
drawne
out of
the sight
of the
poore &
diseased.*

Of the spirit of seruour of S. Francis in his preachings.

THE L. CHAPTER.

1. Tim. 4.

Because the Apostle saith, that piety is profitable and behoufull in euery thing; this vertue was so vnited to the hart of the holy Father, and so engrauen in his bowels, that it seemed to subiect him to all creatures: but especially to the soules redeemed by the precious blood of our Lord IESVS CHRIST: for if he saw them sicke or dead in sinne, he had such a tender feeling of hart and affection with them, as if he had naturally begotten them. And in that respect he exceedingly honoured Preachers, because they alwayes rayfed some dead Brother vnto our Redeemer, and with a pious care endeauoured to reuoke the erring, and to confirme the imperfect in God. S. Francis then preached being vested with this zeale and charity towardes his neighbour, not with selected wordes or by humane art, but by the vertue and doctrine of the holy Ghost, did manifest vnto them the kingdome of God: his preaching was vehement as a burning fire, that

OF THE FRIER MINORS LIB. I. 97

that penetated the center of the hart, and putt soules into a conri-
uall admiration, and as it were beside themselues. Prayer alone was
all his bookes, distrusting all his knowledged and industrie, and en-
tierly relying on the diuine vertue. He obtained of God this his holy
grace which he so instantly required for alsistance of his neighbour,
in such sort that his wordes did penetrate not only the eares, but euen
the hartes of sinners.

It only once happened that he studied his sermon, and the
reason was because he was to preach before the Pope and many Cardi-
nals, by commandement of the Cardinall of Hostia Protectour of his Or-
der. The time being come to ascend the pulpitt, and being therin, he
could by no meanes beginne his sermon, though he exceedingly labou-
red to doe it: which inhinitely troubled him, and much amazed the as-
sistantes: wherfore he publickely acknowledged that he had seriously stu-
died that sermon: but hauing incontinently recourse to prayer, & in few
wordes recommending himselfe with all his hart vnto God, vtterly re-
iecting his former conceipt, and entierly referring himselfe to his diuine
maiestie; he began to preach with such feruour, that hauing in an instant
sett att liberty his holy tongue, he deliuered matter so learned, subli-
me and so necessary, that he moued all the hartes of his audience to
compulsion: and then it appeared to each one that the wordes of God
were vndoubtedlie true, where he saith: It is not you that speake but
the spiritt (of God) that speaketh in you. This holy Father thus ob-
tayning the reuelations of the diuine mysteries by meane of prayer,
and correcting first whatsoeuer vices he found in himselfe, it is not to
be admired that he moued the most obdurat hartes vnto pennance,
reprehending vices with such vehemence. He preached with like fer-
uour, his constancie being incredible, both to great and meaner peo-
ple, riche and poore, many and few, and alwayes with exceeding
proffit.

*Hauing
seriously
studied a
sermon
he could
not re-
cite it.
And yet
he other
wise de-
liuered
worthy
matters.
Mat. 10.*

What condicions S. Francis required in Preachers.

THE LI. CHAPTER.

BEing, according to the example of IESVS CHRIST a true Euan-
gelicall Preacher, and teaching rather by workes then wordes,
he would in like sort that his disciples rather wanted learning
then goodnes: because, sayd he, the function and grace of preaching is
farre more gratefull to God then any other humane office, if it be elpe-
ciallie practised with a care of perfect charitie: adding with all that the
poore and wretched preacher that despoiling himselfe of pietie sought
not

not the benefit of soules in his preachings, but only to please men for his particuler interest, deserued to be lamented, so miserable was his state and condition. But more greiuous was his case that by his lewd life, he scandalized and ruyned more soules, then he gained by his doctrine. Herevpon he inferred that before such Preachers was to be preferred a simple Religious man, who by his pious example and imitable life, induceth each one to vertue. Which is insinuated by the wordes of S. Anne: *Donec sterilis peperit.* Till the barren bring forth many children: and she that had many become infirme: vnderstanding the barren to be the simple Religious, whose function is not to preach and by his doctrine to bring forth any child vnto God: but att the day of the vniuersall iudgement, it will appeare that, by his life, his example, his prayers, and his teares which he hath presented vnto his diuine maiestie, imploring him for the conuersion of sinners, he shall haue engendred many more in the Church of God, then diuers that preach, because the iust iudge shall attribute them all vnto him for his merittes, and shall recompense him accordingly. And the mother, that is, the Preacher that in exterior apparence seemed to haue many children shall appeare infirme: because he shall proue to haue no part in that, wherein he gloryed as proceeding from himselfe and not from God. In respect wherof he would not that the Preachers should be distracted and transported by cares and affaires of the world: but should remayne retired and attentue to prayer, as being elected by his diuine Maiesty, for publishing his holy word vnto sinners. Therefore, said he, the first thing that a Preacher ought to doe, is in priuate prayer to feed himselfe with the spirit of God: then, being himselfe enflamed within, to communicate and impart vnto them, thereby to enflame them without.

1. Reg. 2.
Notable
application of
a place
of scripture.

How
much S.
Fr. honoured
the office
of preaching.

The Function of preaching was by him reputed reuerend, & so consequentlie the Ministers therof: Preachers, said he, are the life of the body of the holy church, they are the champions and bucklers of soules against the deuill: they are the burning torches of the world. It cannot be esteemed how worthy they are of honour if they be such as they ought to be, and on the contrary, how much they deserue pittie and compasison, if they sell their doctrine, for recompence of a vaine and transitorie applaule. For which respect this holy Father could not endure such that esteemed more of themselues for being eloquent and learned, then for being seruantes of the omnipotent God, and employed by his diuine Maiesty, in the most eminent degree that his Church affordeth: to those whome he knew to be such he said: Wherefore doe yee glorie of them that are conuerted to penance by your preachings as though yourselues did conuert them, whereas my simple Religious doe also the same? And therefore, the preachers that entierlie applied them-

themselves to preaching without any deuotion he called euill disposers of his goodes, and exceedingly extolled those that had respect and memory of themselves, after their preachings retyring and applying themselves to the spirit of prayer, and to talke how sweet God is, after his example, who leauing his disciples, retyred him selfe vnto the mountaines to pray.

Ios. 3.
18. &c.

*Of the seruent piety and charity which S. Francis had towards God
and his saints.*

THE LII. CHAPTER.

WHo can euer expresse the seruent piety, wherwith the glorious Father S. Francis, the deere freind of his Spouse IESVS CHRIST alwayes burned in his hart: considering that by meanes of this his seruour he was most often rapt out of himselfe and so transformed in IESVS CHRIST, that it well appeared, that with the exteriour quill, the stringes of the instrument of his hart were touched within: Wherefore he affirmed that it was vnwonted and ouer abundant prodigality, to offer so great a price as the loue of God for an almose: and he tearmed them senseles, who were ignorant therof, and who made more esteeme of a base farthing then of such a purchase, for so much as they refused that slender price, which sufficed to buy heauen: besides that the loue of him who hath so much loued vs, ought iustlie to be prised and esteemed aboue althings. And to the end himselfe might be often stirred to this diuine loue, he considered althings as proceeding from the hand of God: and so by the consideration of creatures, he was with an admirable sweetnes swallowed vp in the contemplation of a most high and first cause and fountaine of all essence and life, admiring in the beauty and composition of the second causes, the most eminent and prudent Creator: and pursued the same euery where to his pleasure, which he found by a thousand new meanes & manners, framing a continuall ladder of althings created, whereby he ascended to the contemplation and fruition of this lord vniuersally desired, and att euery steppe of the said ladder, he tasted, as in a litle brooke, of that most delicious fountaine of bounty, with an extreme pleasure, as if he had heard that celestiall harmony and consonance of the diuersity of vertues, and of their effectes which God gaue to his creatures, for which counterchaunge he awakened and stirred the with the Prophet to prayse Psal. 148. their Creatour, as in place heerafter shall appeare.

*That one
ought
not to
denie al-
mose de-
maunded
for the
loue of
God.*

He continually carried his desired crosse, as a pleasing litle bundle

of mirrh fauouring in his hart : desiring with all his power, to be transformed into it, therby to be enflamed with an excelsiue loue, and to that end he had appointed lentes, in which he retired into hermitages to enioy in silence his amorous IESVS CHRIST, who as gracious failed not to reciprocate his dearly beloued in giuing him diuine consolations.

How deuotion vnto the B. Sacrament.

Why S. Francis would not be Preist.

How deuotion he was to the Virgin Mary.

To S. Michel and to S. Peter & S. Paul.

He burned with deuotion in the interiour of his bowels towards the sacred sacrament, admiring that so charitable and excelsiue diuine communication. And when he communicated, which was often, it was with such and so great deuotion, that such as were present were amazed and enforced to deuotion, seeing him so replenished with this celestially tast, wherewith being as it were drunken, he was with all raiued into mentall extasy. And he was so zealous and reuerent thereunto, that fearing to handle it vnworthely, he euer refused to be Preist, yea being thereto vehemently sollicit, and so farre forth as he could no longer resist. Wherefore he had recourse to his ordinary defence, which was prayer, wherin demaunding Counsaile of God, an Angel appeared vnto him with a viol in his hand full of most pure and cleare liquor, who sayd: Behold Francis, he that will administer the most holy sacrament, ought to be as pure as this liquor: in respect of which wordes, he had neuer thence forward desire to be preist, esteeming it no small matter to be Deacon, sith so great a purity was required in Preisthood. And therefore he commanded the Superiours and all other Religious, to be carefull in the prouinces where they resided, to aduertise and exhort the people, Clarkes and Preistes, to place the most sacred body of our Lord in a decent place with all reuerence: and sent them the mouldes and first formes or modeles of Steele wherin to make the hosties. He was also carefull to haue the altares and churches very neate and curiously adorned, and in all his chapters made mention thereof. He loued and reuerenced the glorious mother of our lord IESVS CHRIST, with such Charity as cannot be expressed, in consideration that she had made the most high lord God our Brother, cloathing the diuine maiesty with our owne flesh. Wherefore next after God, he reposed all his hope in this glorious virgin, and euen from the originall of the institution of his Religion, he made choice of her for his protectrice and aduocatrice vnto her Sonne: and for her honour and glory, he fasted as we haue formerly alleadged. After that, besides and aboue all the other Angels whome he reuerenced (for the speciall care they haue of vs), he was with an inseparable bond of loue vinted vnto the Archangell S. Michael, in regard of his office. presenting soules vnto God, and in deuotion vnto him, he fasted for-

forthye dayes before his feast. In this holy fast it was, that he merited that notable fauour of the stigmatres : as hereafter in place conuenient shalbe inserted. Finally he was generally enflamed in the memory of the glorious Saints affecting them with all his soule, as liuely stones of the celestially edifice, shining and glittering with that immensue light, aboue all other resplendant with the charity of IESVS CHRIST, and among them he especially reuerenced with a singuler deuotion the Princes of the Apostles, S. Peter and S. Paul : for he went often to Rome expresly to visitt them, and not in vaine sith he was reciprocally by them visited, protected and comforted in all occurances.

Of the great charity of S. Francis, towarde his neighbour, and how he freed his Brethren of temptations.

THE LIII. CHAPTER.

THe poore of IESVS CHRIST S. Francis, had but two peeces of mony (so called he the body and the soule) which vpon euery occasion he offered for the loue of IESVS CHRIST: the one by an ardent seruour, and the other by abstinence and discipline : sacrificing the flesh exteriorly in holocaust, and interiorly burning in the temple of his soule, the sweet incense of piety, eleuating his spiritt vnto God by a most seruent loue, and extending it by his interiour benignity, ouer all creatures that were associated vnto him by nature and grace, and redeemed by the precious bloud of our lord IESVS CHRIST. He had not bin reputed the freind of IESVS CHRIST, if he had left desolate the soules, redeemed by such an inestimable price. Wherefore he affirmed that one ought to preferre the safety of soules before al thinges : sith that the only Sonne of God the Father, would be crucified on the crosse for their saluation. Therefore when he prayed, he poured out an infinite quantity of teares. When he preached he extremely heated himselfe : and in this consideration it was that he so rigorously afflicted his body : for it was not to punish it for sinnes, which he had desisted to committe, *Why S. Francis* nor to preserue himselfe therefrom, by reason that the hand of *so much* God was with him. But it was to the end that by his example and merittes, he might free and deliuer the poore soules of *afflicted* IESVS CHRIST from that horrible and insatiable gulph of hell, *his body.* vsing those wordes of S. Paul: If I speake with the tongues *1. Cor. 13.*

of men, and of Angels and haue not charity, I giue no good education to my neighbour, and very litle doe I profit others, and much lesse my selfe.

How much he honoured Preists & Preachers: & respected old men and those that were in authority in the world and especially the poore.

Therefore he deuided this his charity as an abundant fountaine into many and diuers chanel, wherby he disperfed it, louing and honouring each one in his degree and estate. He particularly honoured Preistes as the Ministers of God, which he performed with exceeding reuerence, acknowledging them to be sanctified by diuine authority, with power to celebrate his sacred mistery, and to absolue foules (his mysticall body) from detestable finnes. He would not see nor consider any imperfection in them, as people that alwayes represented vnto him IESVS CHRIST. He left by testament vnto his disciples this notable respect which he had vnto Preistes, and shewed by example that euery man ought to reuerence them, as personnes in whose authority next after God, consisteth the recouery of our saluation. He exceedingly honoured Preachers and diuines, as they who administred vnto vs the spirit and life of the word of God. He also much respected old people, and gaue due honour to men of power and authority in the world. But in especiall manner did he ground his affection on the poore. He had peace and charity with all the world, and would that his Religious should endeaour the like, that none might be scandalized or troubled by their occasion. He manifested vnto them the cordiall loue wherwith he affected them, as his children in IESVS CHRIST, in that he did not conuerse with them, as their head, lord, or Superiour, but as Father, brother, and seruant, participating of all their necessities, afflictions and temptations: so that he might well say with the Apostle: Who (among you) is weake, and I am not weake? who is scandalized, and I am not burnt? and on the other side he congratulated extremely att the spirituall progresse they made: he corroborated and comforted the feeble, and they that were tempted, as by these examples may appeare.

How much He loued his disciples.

2. Cor. 11

He manifested vnto them the cordiall loue wherwith he affected them, as his children in IESVS CHRIST, in that he did not conuerse with them, as their head, lord, or Superiour, but as Father, brother, and seruant, participating of all their necessities, afflictions and temptations: so that he might well say with the Apostle: Who (among you) is weake, and I am not weake? who is scandalized, and I am not burnt? and on the other side he congratulated extremely att the spirituall progresse they made: he corroborated and comforted the feeble, and they that were tempted, as by these examples may appeare.

He was on a time entreated by one that was violently tempted, to pray vnto God for him: to whome, comforting him he said: My child be not disquieted, for this ought to be vnto thee an assured testimonie that thou art pleasing and gratefull vnto God. None may esteeme himselfe the seruant of IESVS CHRIST, but in afflictions and temptations. There are many, though ignorant, that glory, not to haue tasted any infirmity, and not to know what temptation is, whereas they might iustly be greiued, and thereby vnderstand their weak spirit and slender loue towardes God, and assuredly beleue that they haue much more to endure in the other world. For God doth here chastice the faithfull, to free them from feare of correction otherwise,

giuing

giuing them the meritt of a more worthy crowne, and doth neuer permit them to be tempted about their forces: but causeth his seruantes to make great benefit of these tēptations. The said Religious was so comforted by these wordes, that albeit he disposed himselfe thenceforward to endure and support his tēptations, yet he incontinently felt all the bitterness he had sustayned, to tourne into ioy and alacrity.

An other Religious being tempted with the spirit of blasphemy, farre more insupportable then any other, fellatt his feet with abondance of teares and such sobbes, that he could not vtter so much as one word. Wherevpon the S. knowing the exceeding torment which this Religious endured, moued with pittie and zeale of his soule, he said: I command you, yee deuils, in the name of our lord IESVS CHRIST, that you presume not henceforward to tempt this Religious, and he was incontinently deliuered, yea in the very instant. Here then appeared the deepe compulsion of the holy Father, and his power against wicked spirits.

1. Cor. 10.

S. FRANC.

command

derth the

deuill.

How he traualled towarde Siria, there to receiue Martirdome.

THE LIIII. CHAPTER.

THe yeare of grace, 1212. the order of S. Francis still flourishing in number and in fame of sanctitie, he ordayned that they should twice in the yeare assemble att our lady of Angels, at the feast of Pentecost, and of S. Michael tharchangel, to suck the milke of Euangelicall pouertie from this their holy mother, and there to conferre of matters necessarie to their Order, and of accidentes occurring: as also to vnite themselues in fraternall loue, animating each other in vertue of the spirit. There were the preachers deputed to their places, and other obediences ordayned. The holie Father desiring to asist not onlie the faithfull, but euen Infidell Pagans, to sow the faith euery where, and to offer himselfe in sacrifice to the fire of Martyrdome, a liuely host vnto God, and by his death after the example of IESVS CHRIST, to lay open vnto erring foules, the way of saluation, in the aforesaid yeare, which was the fourth of the institution of his order, being no longer able to suppress the flame of desire of martyrdome, he resolved to passe the sea to goe preach vnto the Infidels in Siria. He embarked himselfe to this purpose, but the vessell which carryed him was encountred with a most cruell tempest, that forced it into Sclauonia where he remayned diuers dayes: his companie refusing to proceed any farther.

S. FRANC.

ordayned

two ge-

nerall

chapters

in the

yeare.

God

would

not that

S. FRANC.

should

suffer

martyr-

dome

which

he so

much

sought &

desired.

*The ship-
me would
not ad-
mitt. S.
Francis
by reason
of his
pouerty.*

Wherefore perceauing himselfe frustrated of his holy desire, esteeming it to arriue by the prouidence and pleasure of his diuine maiesty: and vnderstanding that there were certaine mariners retourning to Aucona, he besought them for the loue of God to conduct him with his companion back againe into Italie. They perceiuing him to be extreme-ly poore and that no benefitt was to be gotten by him, they made excuse that they had slender prouision. But the holy Father relying on the mercie of God, entred so secretlie with his companion into the shipp that they were not seen of the Patron. Being so hidden without the knowledge of any person to giue them to eat, an Angel sodenlie appeared to a man in the ship that had the feare of God, to whome he gaue prouision for his seruant, saying. Take this food and dispose it prouidentlie for the reliefe of the two Religious, that are hidden here within, whome he shewed vnto him: and when they shall haue need, be charitable vnto them. Hauing said thus much he disappeared, and what he had giuen in charge, was performed. The mariners in meane while so long stoted in stormes and tempestes, that they spent all their prouision, so that there only remayned in the shippe that releife which God had sent vnto the S. which appearing to be but litle, did neuertheles in such sort augment, by the prayers of S. Francis, rendring good for euill, that it sufficed for all them that were in the vessell, till they arriued att their pretended port: which miracle being knowne vnto the Patron, he repented to haue refused to admitt them, for the loue of God, whose diuine Maiestie notwithstanding was pleased to shew such a manifest miracle, to the end it might appeare how much more his seruantes do by their merittes, support and vphold the world, then they are supported by it.

*God pro-
vided
food for
S. Franc.
and for
other
in the
ship for
his sake.*

*Of the Conuersion of the glorious S. Clare and of the beginning
of her Order.*

THE LV. CHAPTER.

*Abbrid-
ged out
of the
conuer-
sion of S.
Clare.*

THe afforesaid yeare, 1212. the glorious S. being by the diuine Maiesty recalled not without consideration of great consequēce, from the voyage of Siria, he gaue a beginning to the Order of the Damianes, the roote and originall wherof, was the glorious mother S. Clare, descended of a noble familie of Afsisiū, who albeit by her parentes educated and nourished deliciously, with intent to be afterward according to the manner of the world honourably married: the holy Ghost did notwithstanding worck the contrary, and intended to enrich her with

with celeſtiall treaſures. For which occaſion euen from her infancy, he had a very particuler care of her, with purpoſe to eſpouſe her vnto our Lord IESVS CHRIST. And when he thought the time conuenient, he permitted that, hearing admirable matters deliuered of the holy Father S. Francis, ſhe with a manly courage reſolued to follow him in the ſtriſt way of euangelical perfection. Hauing then found opportunity, ſhe preſented her ſelfe alone to the ſaid S. and hauing diſcouered her hart vnto him, he inſtantly perceaued the inſpiration which ſhe had from God, and in very few howers giuing the farwell to her kinred, her ſubſtance, together with all the world, ſhe procured him to cutt of her haire, and to cloth her with his owne habitt, before the aulter of our Lady of Angels. For more ſecurity, the holy Father S. Francis committed her to the monaſtery of S. Paul, where were Religious of the Order of S. Benett, whence by reaſon of extreme perſecutions and violent proceedings off her kinred hauing att length taken her out, he placed her in the Church of S. Damian, where was the firſt monaſtery of S. Clare, and by reaſon of their number that there encreaſed, they were called Damianes, as ſhall ſeuerally and verie particulierlie appeare in the eight booke, in the life of B. and glorious Saincte Clare.

How the S. Went to Moroccho to ſeeke Martyrdome.

THE LVI. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis euer thirſting to be martyred for the faith of IESVS CHRIST, being peruented of his iorney into Siria, in the yeare 1214. he attēpted a voyage together with Brother Bernard & Brother Macie, towardeſ Moroccho through Spaine, ſuppoſing thence to find paſſadge vnto the Emperour of the Mores att Moroccho, called Miramoline, to preach vnto him the faith of IESVS CHRIST. He enterpriſed this iorney with ſuch alacritie, that albeit he were very feeble and infirme; he notwithstanding did alwayes ſo much out goe his companions that he ſeemed to fly. But being arriued in Spaine, his infirmities did ſo oppreſſe him, that he could hardly trauell vnto S. Iames in Galicia, where proſtrating himſelfe before the altare of the ſaid S. and praying with his accuſtomed feruour, God enioyned him to retourne into Italie, becauſe many places were offered vnto him wherein to accommodate his family, and that his retourne thither was very neceſſary, to confirme the greene places of his erected vingneyard.

In this iorney S. Francis was att Guimaranes a citty of Portugall, where

where it is said that he rayfed the daughter of the master of the house where he lodged: thence he visited the queene Vracca wife of king Alfonso the second, who beheld him with great reuerence and deuotion, and was exceedingly comforted and edified by him. Proceeding afterward on his iorney, he lighted on a riuer in the said prouince of S. Iames, betweene the citties of Nonis and Orgogno, which he knew no meanes how to passe by reason there was not any house in that part nor personne to conduct him ouer. Not knowing then what to doe he had recourse to prayer, and att the very instant whiles he was praying to God, there came a boy from the citty of Nonis, who hauing pittie of them, gaue the encouragment saying, that hauing passed ouer his horses that were laden with bread, he would vnload them and retourning, would conduct them ouer: which he performed, and hauing guided them to Orgogno, he lodged them in a house of his where he putt his bread, wherein he gaue them the best entertainment he could deuise: for which the holy Father gaue him many thanckes att his departure, and said: God giue you the payment which he hath promised to good people: and so departed.

That very yeare (which is worthy admiration) this yong man retourning from Rome hauing visited the Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul he demaunded of God as a speciall grace that he would please to take him out of this world before he lost the meritte of so many holy indulgences which he had gotten. His prayer was not frustrate, for by the merittes of the blessed Father S. Francis, as by the consequence is apparent, God heard him from heauen, and so he died in the very pilgrimage. His Father by letters from freindes being aduertised of his death, after much lamentation, procured the office of piety to be performed for his soule, att the end of which office, there appeared in the said citty of Nonis, about seuentie Frier Minors, though those people neuer supposed so many to be in all the world, and they were all present att the church in procesion, singing with such melodie and with so pious a sweetnes, that they drew teares of deuotion from all the audience. After they had sung masse, the parentes of the deceased inuited them to eat with them, which they did, and then departed, and a great multitude of those people conducted them very farre: the table was afterward found furnished with meate, as if they had not eaten. This miracle being perceaued, many ran after them to see if they could recouer them, and know the place of their residence, but they could neuer see nor heare of them. It was then iudged, that this was the recompence of the curtesy which the deceased had done to S. Francis and his companions, when he entertained them att Orgogno: and thence, forward those people were euer exceeding deuot vnto the Freer Minors.

*Seuentie
Frier Mi-
nors were
miracu-
lously
transpor-
ted from
Italy into
Spaine
att the
seruice of
a benefa-
ctour of S.
Francis.*

In

In the same iorney betweene Barcelone and Ghirone, neere vnto S. Celony, one of the companions of S. Francis being very hungry entred into a vineyard which he happelie found there and did eat of the grapes. The keeper of the vines hauing perceaued it, tooke from him his cloake (which he very patientlie permitted him to take) and would not restore it whatsoeuer instance S. Francis vsed: but carried it to his master, of whome the said S. so graciously demaunded it, that he did not only restore it, but withall inuited him to eat with him, where he in such sort comported himselfe, that this good man entierlie edified by the wordes of the S. and by his doctrine, offered himselfe to be a perpetuall host vnto all the Freer Minors that thenceforward should passe that way. To whome the S. reciprocally replied: I accept thee for a Freer of our Order: and so proceeding in continuall performance of that charity when they passed that way, he died many yeares after: and as his kinred procured his obsequies to be performed, where were present many Preistes, some did deridingly beginne to murmure, saying that the Freer Minors did not appeare att the death of one of their so affectionate Brethren, of who they had receaued so many curtesies: and vpon the deliuerie of these wordes there came two and twentie Religious, singing the Psalmes of Dauid with an exceeding melodious harmony, who hauing finished the office in the Church, did all disappare. The kinred of the deceased prepared for them to eat: but they rested content with only giuing thanckes to God with the rest of the people, for the recompence he affordeth those that entertayne his seruantes, euen after their death. It was then ordayned in that citty, that the Freer Minors should thenceforward there be lodged and entertayned with all thinges necessary att the chardge of the common purse. S. Francis pasing afterward through the kingdome of France, preaching in a hospitall att Montpellier, he prophetically foretold that in that citty should shortlie after be erected a monastery of Freer Minors, which was accordingly verified soone after, in that a Couent was there built which was very worthely mayntayned, till the fury of the Caluinian heresie did vtterly ruinate the same.

*A litle
after 22.
Freer
Minors
came al-
so from
Italy in-
to Spai-
ne att
the obse-
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nefa-
ctour.*

*S. Franc.
foretold
future
thinges.*

Of the first meeting of S. Francis and S. Dominick,

THE LVII. CHAPTER.

THe yeare of grace 1215. when the first generall Councell was held att Lateran, during the raigne of Pope Innocentius the third, the holy Father S. Dominick was att Rome with the Bishop of Tolous called Falcon, to procure the Popes confirmatiō of

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the

the Order of Preachers which he then intended to institute and establish: wherof the Pope being by diuine reuelation aduertised, and enformed of the great fruit that this Order should produce vniuersally to the holy Church, att his first vew of S. Dominick, without farther notice of him, incontinently commanded him to retourne vnto Tolouse, and to conferre with his Religious touching the penning of a rule that might be approued by the Church, vnder which his Religion might be confirmed. S. Dominick then retourning to Tolouse, and hauing with his Religious implored the diuine assistance, they made election of the rule of S. Augustine, with the name and title of Preachers. The yeare following being 1216. (Honorius the third succeeding Pope Innocent the third) retourning to Rome, he demanded of the Pope that then succeeded, the said confirmation with the Bull and apostolicall authority, in vertue wherof to make profession, and with all to adde other constitutions that seemed necessary. All which hauing obtayned, the night ensuying he saw in prayer our Lord I E S V S CHRIST att the right hand of God against sinners in an hideous and terrible manner: brandishing three launces in the aire against the world: the first to suppress the hautines of the proud: the second to disgorge the ouer-stuffed entrailes of the auaricious: and the third to massacre the carnall. There was none that could resist this wrath, but the virgin Mary his most sacred mother, whome he saw most affectionately to embrace the feet of her sonne, beseeching him to pardon those whome he had redeemed with his precious blood, and with the mixture of his infinite mercy to delay that his rigorous iustice. Then he heard our Lord thus answere her: See you not mother how manie iniuries they doe me? how is it possible that my holy iustice permitt so many enormities to be vnpunished? His most gracious mother thus replied: Thou knowest my deere Sonne, what is the way to conuert sinners vnto thee: but behold here a faithfull seruant of thine, whome thou mayst presently send into the world to preach thy word to men: that being conuerted vnto thee their Sauour they perish not, and behold there also an other of thy seruantes ready to assist him. Presenting vnto him S. Dominick and S. Francis, with whome he saw God to be satisfied. Now S. Dominick awaking verie well retayned the markes wherby he might know this his companion, whome he neuer knew before. But the day following, by diuine prouidence he mett S. Francis, who was then in the Church of saint Peter att Rome, whome he incontinently knew by the markes which he had obserued in the said vision. Then he ran and verie affectionatelie embraced him and said: we shalbe companions and shall labour together in our holie purpose, and neither any man

nor

*A vision
of S. Dominick.*

nor wicked spirit, shall haue power to preuaile against vs. At length he recounted vnto him the said vision. And after long discourse together, they remayned vnited in God with one hart, will, and spirit. They commanded the like vnto their brethren: This vision was imparted vnto the Religious of saint Dominick by saint Francis his meanes, to whome onlie the said saint had recounted the same.

*How these two SS. had fight of each other an other time att Rome,
and how they reiected the benefices that were presented
to them and to their Religious*

THE XLVIII. CHAPTER.

THese two eminent lightes sent of God to illuminate the world, did an other time meet together att Rome in Cardinall Hosties house, who for the great zeale he carried to the Church of God, and for the deuotion wherwith he respected them both, said vnto them: In the primitiue Church the Prelates were poore, and liued without any vanity, gouerning the flock of Christ with loue and humility, not by desire of terrestriall and temporall thinges: therefore in myne opinion the holie church would retourne to her primitiue estate, if of your Religious we should make Bishops and Prelates, because by their doctrine, good example of life, and by contempt of the world, they would represent to the whole world the Prelates of the primitiue church; or att least they would be farre better then we, who liue ordinarilie in vanities, because they are instructed and educated in humilitie and pouertie, and therefore touching this point I shall be glad to know your opinion. The Cardinall being silent, there arose a pious contention betweene the two holie Fathers which of them should first answere. Att length S. Francis superiour of humility, left the superiority of obedience vnto S. Dominick, wherby he answered the Cardinall in these wordes: The Dominican Preachers are in a sufficient good and high estate, if they can conceaue it, and therefore for as much as shall lye in my power, I will neuer consent that they ascend to higher dignitie. And then silent S. Francis arose, and with great vehemencie thus spake: My Religious are called Minors, onlie in respect that they neuer presume to be made great in this world, and much lesse to be Prelates: so that their title sheweth them their true vocation, which is to remayne alwayes in their meannesse, and to tread

*Why S.
Domi-
nick and
S. Franc.
would
not their
Religious
should
haue be-
nefices.*

*S. Dominick bare
out of
deuotion
a girdle
of S. Fr.*

the steppes of humility of IESVS CHRIST, that they may meritt to be exalted in the other world among the blessed. Therefore if you will that they fructifie in the Church of God, keep them low, as they are, yea if they would aspire to prelatie, neuer consent therunto. Here was the S. silent also. The Cardinall remainyng exceeding well satisfied with these two answares, dismissed the S. who going together, S. Dominick most instantly requested of S. Frâcis the cord wherewith he was girded, who after he had of humility much denyed him, was at last content to be ouercome by charity, and vngirding himselfe gaue it vnto him: S. Dominick out of great deuotion girded himselfe therewith vnder his habitt: and afterward they departed each from other. S. Dominick vsed these speeches generally to all men: I speake it in verity, all other Religious ought to admire and imitate the life of this man, so great is his perfection, and so true the way which he hath vndertaken to follow IESVS CHRIST.

*How S. Francis proceeded in sending his Religious ouer all Christendome,
and deuided vnto them the prouinces.*

THE LIX. CHAPTER.

*The Freer
Minors
were not*

IN the yeare of grace, 1217. the generall chapter being held att Afisium, by reason of the great multitude of Religious that were there prelent, the Prouinces were assigned, as well on this side, as beyond the Mountaines throughout all Christendome. Then were elected Prouincials, with companions and personnes deputed to their obedience: and because then there were not a few heretikes in Spaine, he sent thither his Religious: and among other Brother Zacharie and Brother Walter trauelled euen to Portugall, who as an vnwonted spectacle were very ill entreated, as well in regard of the nouelty or rarenes of their habitt, as for the diuersity of their language: and suspecting them to be heretikes, they were not permitted to rest in any place: wherfore they addressed themselues to the said Queene Vracha, by whose fauourable protection they were receaued att Coymbra, Guymaranes, Alanquer, and Lisbone, as hereafter with the rest of their life shalbe declared in the sixt booke. The others were much worse entreated, no man yielding to receaue them not knowing whence they were, and therefore they were driuen away, especially because they brought not authentically letters from the Pope, that might giue testimony of their condition. Wherfore they were constrained to retourne vnto S. Francis, who incontinentlie aduertised the Cardinall Hostie therof, then made protectour of the Order, after the death of the Cardinall of S.

Sebastian, who was their first protectour, but not according to the forme of their Order as this was, who offered himselfe to S. Francis for such, and for a Brother of the Order: whome also the S. himselfe required of the Pope to be their Protectour.

The holie Father being then by the said Cardinall of Hostie presented vnto his holynes and to the colledge of Cardinals, he deliuered vnto them a notable oration of the praise of Euangelicall perfection, wherof himselfe and his Religious were Professours, with such and so great seruour, that he put all the Colledge into exceeding admiration and deuotion towards his Religion: who thervpon promised him all fauour. He esteemed himselfe happy, who after the Consistory was ended, could haue a Freer Minor in his companie. And the Pope caused letters patentes to be made him, wherof the tenour was such: Honorius bishop, and seruant of the seruantes of God, to our welbeloued, and as our Brethren, Arch-bishops and Bishops, our welbeloued sonne, Brother Francis of Assisium, and his companions of the Order of Minors, hauing, after they had condemned and abandonned the vanities of this world, chosen the way and life of perfection, with iust reason approued of this holy Church, and sowing the word of God, in imitation and example of the Apostles, through diuerse Prouinces: We pray and command you in vertue of holie obedience, by these presentes our Apostolicall letters, that when any of them shall repaire vnto you, with these said presentes, you receaue them as Catholiques, and true beleeuers: and that, for the reuerence of God, whose true seruantes they are, and ours also, you shew them fauour and curtesie. Given att. Etc. The said letters were signed by the Protectour and other Cardinals, to the glorie of God, and the benefit of soules.

permitted to preach but were expelled for hauing no bull from the Pope.

The breife of Pope Honorius in approbation of the Freer Minors, and to permit them to preach.

Of two other Apostolicall Breuies, graunted by the same Pope, transferred vnto this place, as proper vnto it out of the tenth booke of these chronicles and 31. chapter.

THE LX. CHAPTER.

IN the fourth yeare of his Popedome, the same Pope sent forth an other of this tenour: Honorius seruant of the seruantes of God, to our welbeloued, Arch-bishops, Bishops, Abbotes, Priors, and other Prelates of the Church, who are with in the Realme of France, health and Apostolicall benediction. Hauing formerlie written vnto you in the behalfe of

The Breif of the said Pope to the Prelates of Fraunce

our welbeloured children the Freer Minors, praying you to haue them in recommandation: as we are giuen to vnderstand, some of you being yet scrupulous of this Order, permitt not them to seiourne in their bishoppricks, though in deed there is in them nothing deseruing suspicion, as we haue bin very precisely enformed and assured, and therefore our letters ought to suffice to dispossesse them of all sinister opinion, that they might formerly conceaue of them. We therfore certifie and giue testimony to each one, that we hold the Order of Freer Minors for approued, and know the Brethren of the said Order to be Religious Catholikes, deuout and of pious conuersation: and therefore we admonish, and by these presentes oblige you, to admitt the said Freer Minors into your bishoppricks, and to hold them highly recommendable, for reuerence of God, and of vs. Giuen att Viterbium, the eight and twentieth of May, the fourth yeare of our Popedome.

In the very same yeare his Holines wrote other letters of the same tenour, in fauour of the said Religion, which are recorded to be extant in the Couent of Paris.

How S. Francis would come into France, and what befell him in the way.

THE LI. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis in an other of the foresaid Chapters, wherin the Freer Minors were distributed ouer Christendome, addressed himselfe to all the Religious and said: My beloued Brethren, Iacknowledge my selfe obliged to giue edification to all the Brethren: therefore my children being sent into diuers Prouinces, to endure hungar, thirst, labour, and other necelsities, it seemeth reasonable that my selfe doe likewise trauaile into some farre country, to the end that others the more voluntarily support their afflictions, when they shall see me vndertake the like: and therefore (his manner being neuer to send forth any Religious, but first to pray vnto God that he would afford some fruit to be reaped therby) hauing with all his Brethren made prayer for himselfe, he arole, and said: In the name of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, of his most sacred mother, and of all the SS. of God, I make choise of the prouince of France, wherin there are many Catholike people, and subiect to the holy Romane Church, and because they be exceeding deuout vnto the most blessed Sacrament, I beleeeue I shall receaue much consolation in conuersing with them: hauing said thus much,

Great deuotion to the B. Sacrament in France.

much, and chosen two companions, he tooke his leaue of his Religious, and enterprised his iorney.

Being arriued att the citty of Arezzo, and not permitted to enter there, because it was night, he lodged att an hospitall in the suburbs, where he vnderstood that the miserable citizens of that place being diuided into two factions, did cruelly murder one an other. And the more to confirme the matter, as he was att his prayers about midnight, he heard such a noise of men and armour, that they seemed to be to armies ready to assault each other: wherby he perceaued manifestlie, the worck of the deuill that mayntayned them in warre. Wherefore moued with compassion, he spent the rest of that night in prayer with much seruour and abondance of teares: then he called Brether Siluester, a Preist, and man of worthy faith and puritie, to whome he said: Goe you to the gate of this miserable citty, and cry with a loud voice, the name of our Lord IESVS CHRIST be prayfed and blessed. Ye deuils that keepe these people in warre and sedition: I command you on the part of almighty God, and in the vertue of holy obedience, to depart all out of this citty: which Brother Siluester hauinge done, the deuils incontinentlie fled; and so without any other predication, or any other meane, the said citizens were reunited and appealed. S. Francis being desirous to prosecute his iorney, would not then stay in that citty, but preaching vnto them afterward att his retourne, he sharply reprehended them for their hatredes that had so furiously and inhumanelie enraged them against each other, and gaue them to vnderstand the great grace which God had giuen thē, by meane of the said wordes which were vttered by Brother Siluester, that was a holy man (not to speake of himselfe) deliuering them from the deuils, that maintayned them in so cruell a warre. By these considerations the S. exceedingly confirmed them in the peace already concluded, and besides induced them to doe penance for their sinnes.

*S. Franc.
pacifieth
a great
sedition
by cer-
taine
wordes
which he
caused
one of
his Reli-
gious to
vtter.*

*How the S. by commandement of the Cardinall Protectour of his Order,
was intercepted of his iorney.*

THE LXII. CHAPTER.

BEing att Florence he there found the protectour of his order, who was legat of his holines in that place. The holy Father going to visit him recoited vnto him the cause of his iorney, that he was traouelling into France, there to plant his Order, & to gaine soules, wherin he met to employ some time: which the Cardinall vnderstanding, was exceedingly disquieted, & endeououred to persuaade him by pregnat reasons

to change his resolution, considering that he might doe greater seruices to God in Italie, and should benifitt more to support and mayntaine his Religion, where it was already knowen, then otherwhere. The S. answered that the cause that most moued him to goe thither was, that he thought it not reasonnable, that hauing sent his Religious into diuers forraine Contryes, to endure many inconueniences, he should rest in repose, whiles they suffered and endured. The Cardinal replied: Wherefore haue you sent your Religious so farre, to vndergoe so many afflictions? The holy Father answered him: Thincke you, my Lord, that God hath instituted this Religion for the good only of the Italian soules? You must know that he hath chosen the Freer Minors, to goe ouer all the world, yea not onlie for the behoufe of faithfull Christians, but euen of Infidelles. And they shall goe, and shall there be receaued, and shall fructifie, gayning many soules to God: who will provide them all their necelssities, when men shall faill them. The Cardinal admiring the good and pious resolution of the S. confessed to beleue that it would arriue as he had designed, neuertheless would he neuer permit him to goe into France. Wherefore S. Francis not minding any further to contradict him, desisted his iorney to content him, and sent thither in his place Brother Pacificus and his other companiōs, and himselfe hauing seiourned some time with the said Protectour, returned to our Lady of Angels.

Of the great generall chapter, called the chapter of Mattes.

THE LXIII. CHAPTER.

In this chapter held a litle after the institutio of the order, were five thousand Freer Minors. As well in regard that the Freer Minors did not yet throughlie appeare ouer all forreine Prouinces, as for other necessary respectes, the yeares 1219. they all assembled by a great generall chapter att our Lady of Angels, where there mett, according to S. Bonauenture, about fise thousand, which would seeme somewhat difficult to beleuee (if such a S. did not testifie it) that this holy Order was so multiplied in so short a space. Whiles this chapter was held, Pope Honorius was withall his Court att Perugia, and the aforesaid Protectour of this order went to Assisium, whence he visited them euery day. He celebrated masse and preached vnto them, conceauing exceeding ioy to see fifty or an hundred of his soldiers of I E S V S C H R I S T walking in open feild vnited together, some employed in pious discourses of God, others in diuine offices, others in some other workes of charitie, and others separated in contemplation: and all this was performed with such and so exact a silence, that there was

not

not heard any noyse at all. So the said Cardinall, as also all the Lordes of the Popes Court filled with extreme deuotion, did both admire and exceedingly reioyce interiourly, yea as much as was possible, seeing those wordes of Iacob to be verified in so great a multitude of the seruantes of God. These are the Campos of God, and his dwelling is here: *Gen. 32.* considering that their lodgings were in the wilde feildes, made of rushes and mattes by them of Alsium, and contriued as a dormitory: therfore was this chapter called the chapter of Mattes or rushes. Their beddes were, either the bare ground, or a litle chaffe, the bolster a stone or blocke of wood, each one was so edified with this company, that many Cardinals, Bishops, great Lordes, and Gentlemen came from farre of deuotion to see this holy and humble congregation: so that it well appeared that the like had neuer bene seene in the world. Many also came only to see and honour the glorious head S. Francis, who in so short a time, had selected out of the world so many and so worthy members, and (as a sage Pastour) had guided such a numerable and precious flock, in the meadoes and spirituall pastures of IESVS CHRIST.

Now all the Religious being arriued, the said S. caused them to assemble together, then arose he as their Captaine, entierlie enflamed of the holy ghost, and gaue them the delicious and forcible food of the word of God, and with a deuout and loud voice, he made them a sermon, whereof the theme was such: My beloued Brethren, we haue *The ordinary sermon of S. Fr. vnto his brethre.* promised great matters: but much greater are promised vs, lett vs obserue those, and aspire after these. The pleasure of sinne is short: but the paine therof perpetuall. Vertue is painefull: but the glory is infinite. Many are called: but few are cholen, and in fine all shalbe rewarded. Vpon which wordes he so subtilly discoursed that euerie one was amazed therat. Afterward he exhorted them all to obedience vnto the holy Church, and to the exercise of prayer, a most efficacious meane to purchase the loue of God, charity, edification of their neighbour, to patience, and labours, to neatnes and purity of life, to haue peace with God, amitie with men, humility and sweetness with all. He likewise exhorted them to solitude, to watchinges, to resist the temptations of the deuill, and withall seriously recommended vnto them the seruent zeale of Euangelicall pouerty, contempt of the world and of themselves: breifely to apply all their cogitation of soule and body on the most high Creatour, Redeemer and true Pastour of soules our Lord IESVS CHRIST. And to teach *S. Franc. would not that any of* them all the aforelaid, rather by effect then by word, he commanded vnder vertue of obedience, that none should take care to provide what to eat or drinck or any other thing necessary to their entertainment:

his should take care for their nourishment. ment: But that they should only applie themselves to the praise of God and to prayer, with these wordes of the Psalmist, which he often iterated: *Cast thy cogitation in God, and he will releue thee.* All obeyed him without hauing care of any thing, and so, void of all other temporal care, they entierlie employed themselves in prayer and prayse of God. *Psal. 54.*

How the holy Father S. Dominick was present att this great chapter. And of the resolution he made that his Religious should not thenceforward possesse any thing of proper, for the great miracle he saw there: and of the great nombcr of Nouices that were receaued att the said chapter.

THE LXIV. CHAPTER.

S. Dominick confessed his fault before S. F. in that he had sinisterly iudged of the said prohibition which he had giuen to his Religious. **T**He holy Father S. Dominick was present att this great chapter with seauen of his Religious, and hauing vnderstood the rigorous commandement of the holy Father S. Francis, he was vtterly amazed: fearing perhappes, in regard of his great loue vnto him, that some scandall might happen, hauing there so great a multitude, and no order taken for their releife. But our Lord IESVS CHRIST did quickly manifest what care he had of his seruantes, (who as birdes did fly in spiritt, and conuersed continually in heauen) to feed them on earth: for he touched the hartes of the people of Perugia, Spoletum, Follingnium, Alsifium, and other neighbour places, yea of all the valley of Spoletum, who by diuine inspiration, came all with vnspeakeable speed as by a struiuing emulation, with horses, mules, asses and chariottes, all loaden with bread, wine, oyle, cheefe, flesh, foule, egges, butter, and other thinges necessary for releife: others loaden with earthen vessels, as pottes, cuppes, iugges, and other vessels for their vse, also with linnen and other commodities, euen with cloth, to couer them, finally they were most abundantlie supplied of whatsoeuer they needed: he esteemed himselfe happy, that could best and most deuoutlie serue them: there might one see kinghtes and other noble men to putt off, and spread one the ground their owne cloakes, to honour these poore of IESVS CHRIST. Inlike sort were seene many Prelates and deuout gentlemen to serue them with like reuerence, as they could haue

This the blessed Father S. Dominick hauing seene, he assuredlie knew that the holy Ghost really dwelt in the seruant of God S. Francis: Wherefore sharpelie reprehending him selfe for the rash iudgment he had conceaued, he fell one his knees before him, confessed

fessed his fault and publikely accused himselfe therof: protesting that
 then he vndoubtedly knew, that God had a particuler care of his ser-
 uantes: whereof he had not till then had the like experience. Ther-
 fore (said he) I promise also to obserue Euangelicall pouerty, and
 henceforth on the part of God I giue my malediction to all the Re-
 ligious of my Order, that from this time shall possesse any thing in
 propriety, be it in common or particuler. And therefore albeit they
 might before haue rentes and posselsious, as indeed they had,
 which they enioyed according to the graunt made them by Pope
 Honorius the third, in the yeare of grace 1216. the first yeare of
 his Popedome, yet the yeare 1220. which was the yeare after
 this great chapter, S. Dominick also holding a generall chapter where
 there were present two hundred and twentie of his Religious,
 they did together reforme their constitutions, and renounced the
 said posselsions which they then enioyed, and such as they
 might thenceforward enioy. By which obligation, though the
 Order of Preachers, may, by iust dispensation, in respect of the
 great fruit they produce in the Church, with their doctrine, haue
 reuenewes for their Colledges, and studies: yet the other mona-
 steries, according to the commandement and malediction of their
 Father S. Dominick, doe stricly obserue Euangelicall pouerty.

The Cardinall of Hostia brought to this chapter a great multitude
 of Lordes, to see the manner of lodgeing of these Religious, who
 seeing them to sitt, eat, and sleepe one the bare ground, or one a
 litle chaffe or hay, without respecting other delicacie, and that for
 pillow they had a stone or block of wood, as we haue said: they
 beat their brestes, and weeping said: If these holy men eat and sleepe
 one the earth, what shall become of vs wretched sinners, that loaden
 with sinne liue in such superfluity without doing penance? Thus
 many being well edified by this holy troupe, endeauoured to change
 their life and manners into vertuous conuersation. Their beha-
 uour was such, and the edification of his Holines Court, of the
 Cardinals, and other great persons, as also of all the neighbour
 people, that there were more then fise hundred Nouices receaued in
 that only Chapter

S.D.
 vobis.
 pouertie,
 & giueth
 his male
 diction to
 al his Re-
 ligious
 presēt &
 to come
 that shall
 infringe
 the same.

There
 were 220
 Iacobins
 present at
 a general
 chapter
 held by
 S.Dom.

In this
 chapter
 of S. Fr.
 were re-
 ceaued
 more thē
 500. no-
 uices.

Of the great maceration and austerities which were discovered in this chapter to be exercised by the Religious of S. Francis, who made mute the superiors of his Order, that would change the rule, and of the terrible chapter that the devils then held against the Freer Minors.

THE LXV. CHAPTER.

Five hundred
mailes &
hoopes of
iron were
by obedience
brought
to S. Fr.
Which
the Religious
used in
stead of
haire.

Monopolie of certaine superiours and learned Freer Minors to moderate the rule of their Order.

THe holy Father S. Francis hauing bin enformed, that in this chapter were many Religious, who to mortifie their flesh, besides their other abstinences, fastes and disciplines, did weare in stead of haire, a shirt of maille, and certaine grosse hoopes of iron about their loynes, which procured them diuers sicknesses, and euen that some died therewith: the pitifull Father commanded, by vertue of obedience that there should be brought him all the said mailles and hoopes: and in an instant were brought him five hundred of the one & the other sort: wherefore he presently there vpon made a cōstitution, that none should presume thenceforward to weare any sort of iron on their flesh.

There were in this Chapter certaine learned superiours, who practised with their Protestour some meane to temperate the rigour of that their so extreme pouerty and liuing, and to moderate it according to some other ancient rule: that shunning extremities, they might choose one more supportable. Which being by the said Cardinall, who also would haue him condescend thereto, related vnto the holy Father S. Francis, he tooke him by the hand and led him to the chapter where those said superiours were yet assēbled, to whom addressing his speech, he said: My beloued Brethren, our most mercifull Lord God hath called me vnto him by this way of simplicitie, pouerty, humility, and of this great asperity of life, and not only my selfe, but all those that will follow me: therefore lett none of you thincke euer to make me espouse an other rule, be it of S. Augustin, S. Bernard, or any other, for my God hath shewed me this; hath called vs vnto it, and will that we be reputed insensible in this world, because he will guide vs to heauen by an other path then this of the humane reasons of your sottish prudence and ignorance, wherewith you are confounded, yea I am so much assured from his diuine maiesty, that he will chastice you by his executioners, the deuils, and then will remitt you into your former estate, whence you are now fallen, though it be against your will, if first you doe it not of your selues. This said he left them with this worthy conclusion. The Cardinall hauing heard so resolute and terrible an answer, vtterly amazed

att the great zeale of God which he demōstrated, durst not reply so much as one word, and the said superiors with such an exceeding terrour and feare of worse successe, remayned mute.

A litle after the said chapter, it was reuealed vnto the S. that whiles it was held, many thousandes of deuils being assembled att the hospitall betweene our Lady of Angels, and Alsifium, held an other, where were present eighteen thousand, conferring of some meanes wherby to hinder the holy progresse of the said Order of the Freer Minors, where after many of the deuils had deliuered their opinion herein, att length one more subtile then the rest, thus proposed: This Francis and his Religious shunne the world, & doe sequester themselues with so much seruour, and for the present loue God with such force, employing themselues in continuall prayer & maceration of their flesh, that whatsoeuer we shall now endeavour against them, will litle or nothing preuaile: therefore mine opinion is, that we thincke not as yet of it, but expect the death of the said Francis, the head of this Order, and the multiplication of the Religious: for then we will procure into it yong men, without zeale of Religion and saluation, venerable old men, and delicate gentilmen, learned arrogants, and men of feeble complexion, such as shalbe receaued to support the honour of the Order, and to augment their number, and then by their meanes, we will draw them all to the loue of the world and of themselues, to a great desire of knowledge, and to blind ambition of honour, and we will so allure them to our fantasie, as we may dispose of them att our pleasure. The other deuils approuing this opinion, departed full of hope of a future reuenge, which would to God had not in part so arriued.

The deuils hold a chapter to ruinate the order of S. Fr.

How the Freer Minors were sent, with authentickall letters, into diuers Christian and Pagan Prouinces: and how God miraculously releined them.

THE LXVI. CHAPTER.

IN the expeditiō of the foresaid great generall Chapter, all the Christian and Pagan Prouinces were deputed to certaine Fathers, who were sent thither, with their companiōs, carrying the letters patētes of the Pope, in fauour wherof they were very ioytully receaued, and courteously entertayned of the Prelates and people; among others, six were sent vnto the city of Morocco, among the Moors, of whome one remayned sick in Spaine, and the other fīue that went thither were gloriously martyred, as in the fourth booke shalbe declared.

S. Francis sendeth his brethren to preach vnto infidels.

Many also were sent vnto Tunes, there to preach against the false sect

of Mahomet, with Brother Giles the third disciple of S. Francis, who being there arriued, were, by the merchantes with whome they came, putt againe into the shippes against their willes, for feare they might incurre some damage by their occasion, and so were sent againe into Italy: there were also sent into diuers other places: for many religious entreated it of the S. for the desire they had of Martyrdom, wherfore to giue them comfort, he permitted them to goe: they did much fruit in diuers places, as in their liues shall appeare, because hauing reposed all their confidence in God, he wrought many miracles by them, and miraculously releued them in their necessities, as in the accidentes following, here placed for example doth appeare.

*How
God susteined
the tra-
uelling
Freer
Minors
in their
necessi-
ties.*

Many of the said Religious being in very vast mountaines, were exceedingly afflicted with thirst, by reason of the extreme heat that then was: so that it could not be more violent; when they came to any fountaine (where hauing had the benediction of their superiour, they drack their fill of that water, which they well knew to be more diuine then terrestriall) considering that they found themselues thereby so corroborated and reuiued that in vertue therof, they courageously performed the rest of their iorney, they yelded thanckes to God for the same.

Two others trauailing according to the Apostolicall manner (without waller) and hauing spent almost, a whole day in trauaile, without getting any bread, were so enfeebléd with hungar, that their extremety seemed att the full, yet did it proue more, when comming into a Church, and demanding a litle bread for the loue of God, of the preist therof, the honest man answered that he had it not: wherfore the poore Religious passing on in a kind of despaire, mett on the way a yong man, who hauing saluted them, began to question with them in this manner: whither goe you so sorrowfull and heauy that you appeare to be ouerchardged therewith? they answered, that finding none that would giue them bread, they walked whither their hungar did lead the, wherof they feared to die, this yong man presently replied: goe to sit downe and eat, here are two loaves. Whiles they were eating, he began to discouer who he was, saying vnto them: O men of litle faith, why distrust you the prouidence of God? why remember you not thole wordes of Dauid so often cited by your holy Father: putt your hope in God, and he will asist you, he that faileth not the very beastes. Know that it hath pleased God, to chastice, and afflict you with hungar, for your weaknes of faith: and therefore learne how you ought to behaue your selues hereafter: which said, he vanished, and the Religious, thus hūbled, demanded pardon of God, to whome they promised amendement.

Psal. 54.

How

*How a man that built a Couent for the Freer Minors had his mony encreased:
this is the thirteenth chapter of the sixt booke, putt in this place
where it ought to be.*

THE LXVII. CHAPTER.

BVt what happened vnto two Religious that were sent into Arragon is verie admirable: being receaued in Lerida, by an honorable gentleman called Raymōd de Barriaco, verie deuout vnto the Order of S. Francis, they perswaded him to build them an oratorie without the towne; assuring him that by such disbursement his monie would not diminish: wherto giuing credit, he so seriouslie sett labourers on worck, that in short time the building was verie forward. Now sending his seruant one day vnto his cabinett to take thence some monie to pay the labourers, he returned, answearing him that there was no more. He not beleeuing it, sent him the second time; but he affirmed that doubtleslie there was none; wherwith the gentleman considering the great expences he had made, and the failing of the foresaid promise, being exceedingly disquieted: went impatientlie to the said two Religious, and reproached them: wherto they humbly answered, that he should not nor be afflicted: but should goe himselte, and curioslie searck, and should without doubt finde the promise of God not to be frustrate. Which the gentleman hearing, being somewhat recomforted and encouraged, beleued the wordes of the Religious. Goeing then himselte; he found all his monie, as if he had not disbursed a penie: and besides he found a notable somme in a corner. Wherefore replenished with ioy at the knowledge of such a miracle of God, he wēt to the said Religious, at whose feet falling prostrate, he demaunded pardon for the litle faith he had: and then with exceding seruour proceeded in the building.

How S. Francis went into Egypt to preach the Faith of Iesus Christ vnto the the Soldan.

THE LXVIII. CHAPTER.

THe yeare of grace 1219. after the said holie Father had sent his brethren into diuers places, as we haue said, he determined to goe preach the faith vnto the great Soldan of Babilon in Egypt, and with such seruour, that the Christians then went with exceeding deuotion, to see if he and his Religious could fight a spirituall combat, and by the grace of God, wrest those prisoners out of the
hands

handes of the deuill. But as a great number of his Religious followed him to goe in his company, arriuing att Ancona, where they were to embarque themselues, he said vnto them: My beloued Brethren, I would willingly content you all. I know that you vehemently desire to accompany me, in regard of your greedy thirst of Martyrdome. But you may well perceauce that it is impoissible, because the vessell is not capable to carry vs all: It is therfore expedient that you referre your selues to the will of God, wherby such of you as shalbe elected, shall presently goe with me, and the others shall remayne in peace. And therfore that none be discontent, you see there a litle child very simple (which saying, he poynted att him, being before him) who knoweth vs not, if you thincke it good, as I doe, he shall make choice of you. They all incontinently consented therunto: the holy Father therfore called the child, to whome in their preience, he said: Tell me, my child, is it the will of God that all these Religious goe with me into Egypt? The child answered, no. Which of them then (replied S. Francis) This, this, this, (said the child) and so by one and one he pointed out eleuen, and no more: which the others perceauing they stopped thir iorney, and the holy Father with the said eleuen Religious embarqued themselues.

*How S.
Francis
knew
the Will
of God
for carrying
With him
those
that accompanied him
going to
the Mores*

At length after a longe nauigation they arriued in Egypt, where the Christian army then beleiged the citiy of Damiett which the Soldan possessed, whose army was also in the feild, euery day skirmishing with ours: so that there was no meane to passe the army of the Pagans, without imminent danger of death, in regard that the Soldan had proclaimed an edict through his campe, that euery More that could bring in the head of a Christian, should be rewarded with a ducat. But the seruant of God S. Francis, who went thither for no other end but to die a martyr, hauing made his prayer, and being spiritually comforted in God, went with all his companions to the army of the Mores, continually singing this verse of the Prophett: Although I shall walke in the midst of the shadow of death, I will not feare euils: because thou art with me. But being discouered by the Mores, diuers of them issued out of the campe and assaulted S. Francis and his companions, as hungry wolues the simple sheep, who yelded themselues captiues without any resistance, affirming only that they had matters of importance to impart vnto the Soldan.

Psal. 22.

How

How the holy Father S. Francis preached vnto the Soldan

THE LXIX. CHAPTER.

THus then was S. Francis and his companions led fast bound vnto the Soldan, who incontinently demaunded who they were, who had sent them into his army, and what was the end of their comming. The holy Father, as one that found himselfe in that place which he had a long time exceedingly desired, with a merueilous seruour of spiritt thus answered him: Know Emperour Soldan, that our comming hither hath not bin enioyned vs by any earthly man or Prince, but by the will and ordinance of that almighty king of kinges, and lord of lordes (the eternall God) who hath sent vs vnto thee, that art not only his creature as we all are, but art also his Minister, and possessest his place in thine Empire: and therefore his most gracious goodnes seeing that thou with all thy people, walkest out of the true way of the knowledge of him, thine only, true, and soueraigne God: and though thou deceauelt thy selfe putting thine affection in creatures, without acknowledging their Creatour and Redeemer: though thou doest faire stray from the way of naturall reason, wherby thou mightest attaine the knowledg of thy faultes, of the honour thou owest vnto his diuine Maiesty, and of his law, yet he, hauing a feeling compassion of thee, hath sent vs hither to teach thee the true way, and the only meane of thy saluation, which consisteth alone in the faith and obedience of I E S V S C H R I S T, the true Sonne of God and true man, who came into the world to redeeme vs from the handes of the deuill, and to giue eternall glory to all them that haue bin, are, and shalbe sincere in holy Faith: and on the contrary, eternall torment and damnation to the disobedient, and such as erre from the said most holy Faith: and to this end would he, by his immensue charity assuming our nature, therwith satisfie all our offences, and die on the wood of the crosse for our sinnes, and would afterwarde leaue vs the meritt of his passion, in the sacrament of holy baptisme, wherby we are new borne to eternall life, that all our sinnes dying, we may lett our selues free from the captiuitie of the deuill, and from eternall death, which this cruell ennemy hath from time to time procured vs. Great Soldan (proceeded the S.) open the eares and eyes of thine vnderstanding: misprize not the Embassadg which thine omnipotent eternall king sendeth thee, permitt his grace to enter into thy hart, and by his holy light he will giue thee instant knowledg of the great blindes wherin till this day thou hast liued: and consider attentiuely how much thou art bound vnto his diuine maiesty, letting thee now vnderstand that he can giue thee

*A most
vehement
and per-
suasue
speech &
exhorta-
tion of S.
Francis
vnto the
Soldan.*

The effect of the holy Fathers speech.

Matt. 10.

a kingdome in heauen much greater then this which he hath giuen thee: here one earth. But if thou perseuer in thine errour; be thou assured of the punishment prepared for thee: for thou must know that soone or late thou must fall into his handes, & yeld him an account both of thy sinnes, and of thy vassals. The holy Father spake these and many other like wordes, with such seruour and vehemencie of spirit, that all those present, though they were all infidels, did manifestlie know, that the said wordes proceeded of a more then humane vertue. And they were indeed vttered with the same spirit, that God promised his seruantes saying: *I will giue you a tongue and wisdom, which the princes of the world shall not be able to resist.*

S. F. having offered to put himselfe into a fire with the preists of the Soldā for proof of his Religion, the high preist of the Soldan ran away.

Now the Soldan acknowledging so great a vertue in the seruant of God, he gaue him thanckes with much reuerence, and tokens of curtesie, then asked him concerning new difficulties, being very attentue to the answeres which the holy Father gaue him, as a man sent him from God: and therefore very instantlie prayed him, not retourne to the Christians, but to remaine with him: the seruant of IESVS CHRIST cntierly circumvested with zeale of the faith, therupon made him this answere.

Great Soldan, If you with all your people wilbe conuerted, I will right gladly remayne with you: and if you haue any doubt that detaineth you from leauing your beleefe for mine, because the time is very short, you may presentlie make prooff therof: lett there be made a great fire in the middes of the army, then call your Sacrificers and Religious & command vs all to enter into the middes of the fire: and afterwarde follow their faith that by their God shall be preferred.

The Soldan, amazed att the proposition made by the holy Father said: I doe not thinck that any of our Religious will make this triall. Wherin he was not deceaued: for he had scarcely vttered that word, but one of his Collociers there present, very aged and among the Turcks reputed for a S. hearing it, incontinentlie slipt away, fearing that (the Soldan, accepting the condition) he should be deuoured by the flames.

S. F. for better affirmation of his faith offereth to goe into the fire.

The holie Father then addresssing himselfe againe into the Soldan, said: Mighty Soldan, wilt thou promise vnto God to become Christian, if I my selfe alone goe into the fire? Wherto I am now readilie prepared. The Soldan answered him that he durst not then make any such promise, much lesse accept such offer, fearing that such an vnwonted attēpt might raise some tumult in his army: neuertheles it wrought much fruit in his hart, and though for the present he did not resolue to be baptised, yet he remayned exceedingly affected to the holy Father, to whome he offered a great quantity of gold, siluer, and apparell, for him-

himselfe and his companions: which the Saint no more esteemed then verie filth, not vouchsafing to behold the same: which much more amazed the Soldan: yet he prayed him againe to accept those presents, to dispose them in almose for his soule, albeit he were not as yet resolved to be baptised. But his requestes were vaine. S. Francis then determined to passe further, as not finding any firme and stable resolution in the Soldan, though he prayed the holy Father to visit him often, affirming that he would conferre more amply with him: & graunted him letters patentes, by vertue wherof he & his Br. might freely preach ouer all his kingdome, wherewith S. Francis departed.

S. F. refused & contemned the presents which the Soldan offered him.

How S. Francis and his companions preached the faith to the kingdome of the Soldan, and how he miraculously resisted a More that tempted him to carnality.

THE LXX. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis diuided his companions and sent them ouer Egypt & Syria, and himselfe with Brother Illuminatus went through all the kingdome continually preaching the gospell. And being on a time enforced to rest himselfe in a certaine place expecting the mitigation of the stormy weather, he retired into a house to lodge, where in was a More, who in the lineamentes and proportion of her face was faire, and of comely grace, but in spiritt extremelie loathsome: she, induced by the deuill, that one each side cast his snares to surprise the S. went to him into a chamber, where purposely she had placed him alone, and instantlie prayed him to sinne with her: the S. answered her: woman if thou wilt that I offend with thee, thou must also yeld to me in my request. Wherto the amorous More presentlie accorded. S. Francis then incōtinently going to a great fire that was there, & spreding it abroad, layed downe and stretched himselfe thereon, inuiting the More to keepe her promise, and lye with him one that bed so gorgious and resplendat.

S. Francis lyeth on the coales.

The More remayned a while pensiue betweene loue and feare, expecting the issue; but att length, seeing him to turne one the coales, as if he had bin onerofes and lillies; she acknowledged her selfe, and her sinne: and was baptised, and afterwards (by vertue of the miracle of the S.) as an other Samaritane, conuerted many Mores vnto IESVS CHRIST. The S. hauing vpon this occasion seiourned there certaine dayes, went on his iorney, & cōming within three or four leagues of Antioch, to a place called Mōtenegro, where was a Monastery of Religious of the Order S. Be. he there made sonie stay & in such sort cōporated him selfe, that in few dayes the Abbott & all the Religious renūcing

A lewd More thinking to tempte S. Fr. was conuerted.

*A whole
monaste-
ry of Be-
nedicti-
nes be-
came of
S. Franc.
Order.*

all their possessions into the hâdes of the Patriarck became Freer Minors.

In the meane while it chaunced vnto two other of his companions that they seeming to a More, so miserable, he of compassion offered them almose, which they refusing in any sort to receaue, the More demaunded them wherfore they would not accept the same, wherto they answered, that for the loue of God they would possesse neither money, or any other thing in this world: the More was therwith so touched, that he sodenly receaued them into his affection, yea into such amity, that thence forward he had care of all their necessities, and promised them to sell his goodes to mayntaine them, if they would continue in that country. The worthy example of their life was so admirable, that they who could not be conuerted by their doctrine, were conuerted by meane of their vertuous workes, which indeed are of much more efficacy: they mollified the most fierce and barbarous nations, mortall enemies of the Christian name, making them compassionate and pittifull, but the number of the wicked and insolent budding forth, and being the more potent in that country, yet not daring to kill them, in regard of the patentes of their great Soldan, they caused them to liue a lamentable life, afflicting them ten thousand manner of wayes: and the holy Father here vpon knowing the will of God to be that he should retourne, hauing by the assistance of his diuine Maiesty, assembled al his Religious, not hauing so much profited among those Barbarians, as he desired, he repayred towards the Soldan, thence (hauing taken leaue of him) to retourne into Italy.

*S. Franc.
retour-
ned to-
wardes
the Sol-
dan.*

How S. Francis returned into Italy.

THE LXXI. CHAPTER.

*The re-
solution
of the
Soldan to
become
Christiā
and his
demaund
to be in-
structed.*

THe said holy Father being returned towards the Soldan, was very ioyfully and graciously entertayned, and he att length told him secretly that he would willingly become Christian, beleeuing firmly that the Christian Religion was the true way of saluation; but he feared to manifest the same for the present, the time seeming improper, he warring against the Christians, nor being secure, by reason that the Mores hated them to the death: but because by thy retourne (said the Soldan to S. Francis) as I coieſture, thou mayest profit many, and I haue many matters to dispatch that deeply concerne me: I beseech thee to instruct me att this present, that mine affaires effected, I may obey thee, when occasiō shalbe presented, as I doe now sincerely promise thee. The holy Father hauing demaunded respite of answere, went to his prayer, wherein perseuering for many dayes together, he continually implored the grace of God for that poore soule, whence he would neuer
dc.

desist, till he was heard, which with the successe being reuealed vnto him, he wēt to the Soldā, to whom he said: Sir, I resolue to goe into Italy, the will of my God being such: but I promise to sēd you two Religious, in time conuenient, by whose meane (according to the reuelation which God hath giuen me, and which I explicate and promise vnto you) you shall certainly be saued. The Soldan, hauing heard so gratefull an answer, with an exceeding contentement imprinted the same in his hart, and S. Francis taking leaue of him returned into Italy, and failed not in the accomplishment of his promise: for he appeared to two of his Religious that were resident in Syria, whom he sent to the Soldan who was deadly sick: the Religious repayred vnto him and instructed him, and hauing baptised him he died.

S. Antony of Padua speaking of this Soldan, conformably hereto affirmeth, that diuers are of opiniō that he was baptised before his death: the firme affectiō which he carryed vnto the Christiāns, being apparantly manifested: for he had entertayned of thē for the guard of his body: & it is well knowne what piety he alwayes shewed towardses our army. Likewise Iames de Vitry Cardinall, in his historie writtē of the conquest of the holie land, giueth testimonie of S. Francis his voyage in thole quarters, in these wordes: We haue seene the Father S. Francis, the first Founder of the Order of the Freer Minors, a simple man and without learning, but so much fauoured of God and men, and eleuated to so high a seruour of spirit, that cōming to the armie of Christiāns, that besieged the citie of Damiette in Egipt, he passed without any feare, armed onlie with the buckler of faith, to the middest of the armie of the Mores, saying: Bring me to the Soldan: to whose presence being come, as soone as he had beheld him, of a most cruell beast as he was, he became a most gentle lambe, and gaue most attentue eare to the word of God which he preached. But att length fearing that many of his people that desirously herad him, and yet did not stirre from his campe, would be conuerted and adhere vnto our army; he returned him with great reuerence vnto vs, praying him att his deperture that he would pray vnto God for him, that he would please to inspire him to entertaine and espouse that law, that were most pleasing and gratefull vnto him.

Of the vehement temptations wherewith the deuils tormented S. Francis.

THE LXXII. CHAPTER.

ALbeit the holy Father wrought so much fruit, conuerting the sinners of Egipt, and conducting them into the true land of promise, which is Religion free from all earthly tribute and obligation: neuertheles the ancient ennemy of this blessed generation

*S. Francis
assured
the Soldan
of his
saluation.*

*And sēd
him two
of his
Religious
to baptise
him a
little be-
fore his
death.*

*Iames de
Vitry
Cardi-
nal.*

did not sleep: for he vsed all the slighthes he could deuise wherewith to confound the same. And because he knew well that it entierly consisted in the head which was S. Francis, he omitted not to assault this fortress, which God had placed on an high scituation to be an example vnto others, hoping alwayes either to weary him, or att least to make some relent and mitigation of his strict rigour and perfection of life. Knowing therefore that all kind of vertue was compleat in the said S. he also stirred all his ministers against him, who notwithstanding could no further preuaile then God would permitt. The arrogant and proud Lucifer, could not support his profound humilitie. Mammon the prince of the world perceauing that there was no wordlie thing in the S. but that he had casiered euery thing, yea him who was prince thereof, by the rigour of Euangelicall pouertie, he neuer slept from endeauouring to make him cast his affection on some creature of this world. The gloutonous Satan watched and laboured to procure some relaxation in the rigour of his diett, lodging, and cloathing. The impatient Asmodeus armed himselfe against him to leuell att the patience of the holie Father. The loathsome and filthy Behemol assaulted him, presenting sensualitye often vnto him, with endeauour to defile the candour of his virginitye. Belzebub the captaine of the idle, omitted no time to tempt him with sloath, and by some apparant reasons, to persuaide him to take some litle recreation: The persecuting prince Leuiathan, tormented him with naturall perturbations, discontentements, and disgustes, wherewith the flesh afflicted the peace and charitie of the S. against which Goliath and his army, the humble Dauid in the name and vertue of his God, obtayned so glorious a victorie, that he might well sing: Francis hath ruined and subdued an hundred thousand enemies, and hath driuen away the derisions and rebukes which the diuels procured vnto the Church by avarice and sensualitye. But God would that the deuill himselfe should by the mouth of the possessed, acknowledge the cruell warre that S. Francis and his Religious waged against him, and likewise the great fruit they produced in soules, though this his confession was sufficientlie knowne and experienced by the world, and reuealed by I E S V S C H R I S T, himselfe: wherfore the S. merited to be crowned, hauing bin so valiant in the fierce assaultes of so many ennemies, and att length vanquished so tedious a combatt as he had from the beginning of his conuersion: First by his very parentes, and afterward by infinite other meanes, that neuer permitted him in repose. But how much more the deuill gaue him occasion to sinne, so much more did he endeauour to meritt, and became pure as gold in the fire. Wherefore

fore he often said: If my Religious knew what warre mine ennemies raise against me, they would perhappes haue compafsion of me, and hold me excused, if I cannot be sometimes with them, as I would desire.

One time when God permitted him for his greater good to be tempted, the deuill drawe him into so deepe a melancholy of spiritt, that exteriorly there appeared many signes therof, he being no longer able to concale nor moderate the same, in such fort as he seemed to be vtterlie abandoned of God. If he would conuerse with his Religious, he could not, if he would be sequestred from them, it was worse, abstinence and mortification of the flesh annoyed him, haircloth and prayer auayled not. He continued in this sort more then two yeares, though one would not haue imagined it had bin of an houres continuance, till att length God determining to haue compafsion of him, as he prayed with effusion of teares, he heard the voice of God that said: If thou hast (so much) faith as a mustard seed, and sayest to this mountaine, remoue from hence thither, it shalbe done. S. Francis then answered, which is this mountaine, my God? and the voice replied: The temptation: then S. Francis: My God, lett thy word then be accomplished. And from thence he was freed, and gaue infinite thanckes to God for the same.

*S. Franc.
had a
temptation
of Melancholy
that continued
two yeares.
Matt. 17.
Marc. 11.*

Of many other temptations with S. Francis had.

THE LXXIII. CHAPTER.

Saint Francis being in continuall prayer in the hermitage of Greccio, a gentleman one night sending him a pillow to vse in regard of the infirmity of his eyes: he could neuer repose nor pray: for he had such a trembling in his head, that all his body was distempered therewith. Now hauing a long time discoursed with himselfe, whence this distemperature should proceed, he att length resolued and concluded, that it could not be occasioned but by the pillow, wherinto the deuill was entred: wherefore he caused it to be carried out of his cell by his companion: who hauing to that purpose layed it on his shoulders and carried it out, incontinentlie lost his speech, and which was yet worse) stood immoueable with the said pillow, *pillow* He continued in this affliction, which how it tormented him *lent vnto* may of each one be imagined, till saint Francis admiring his *S. Franc.* long variance, called him: att which voice the Religious retourned *for his* to himselfe, cast the pillow instantlie to the ground, and ran *infirmity* to the S, to whome he recounted all, wherypon he answered him:

My

My Brother, last night whiles I was att compline, I vnderstood that this deuill came hither: and know that finding no other place, he entred into the soft pillow: learne therefore now how subtill and malicious he is, that hauing no power to endommage the soule, because it is protected by diuine grace, he seeketh to hinder the repose of the body, that it may not pray, and performe other exerciles in time conuenient; or to make it disealed to procure it to murmure, and thereby to fall into sinne.

*How S.
Francis
was assured of
his sal-
uation.*

Being an other time afflicted with the said infirmities of his eyes, in such sort as for the space of fifty dayes together, he could see no light, he was placed in a very darck cell made of rushes, mattes, and earth: there did he endure such excelsiue greife, as he could not haue one hower of repose. The deuill to augment his affliction, sent him into his celle a very great quantity of huge mice, that they might prouoke him to impatience: wherefore the S. being entierly resigned into the handes of God, feeling a vehement anguish in his hart, vttered these wordes Help me, my God, in such a multitude of infirmities, diseases, and afflictions: that I may patiently endure them. Where to a voice answered: Tell me, S. Francis, if for thyne infirmities and afflictions, one should promise thee such a treasure, and of so great valew, as if all the earth were gold, and all the stones diamondes, or other precious stones; and all the waters baulme, wouldest thou not esteeme all thy miseries, filthy dirt, in comparison of the said treasure, and wouldest thou not be content more then voluntarily to supporte the same? herevnto the S. answered, yea, I should be very glad therof. Well reioyce thee then (replied the voice) that thou mayest liue content and secure, as if thou wert in my kingdome. Hauing concluded his prayer, with exceeding ioy of this vision, deliuerance & diuine promise, he incontinently said to his companions: If a king had giuen a kingdome to a seruauant, should not he haue cause to be alwayes ioyfull? And they answered, yes. And if (added he) he gaue him all the Empires of the world, should he not haue yet greater cause of ioy? they likewise answered, yes. I ought then said he, infinitely to reioyce in mine infirmities and greifes, and for them to giue thanckes vnto the Father of mercie, vnto my Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, & to the holy Ghost the true comforters: for he hath shewed such mercie to me his vnworthy seruant, as to vouchsafe att this present to assure me of his kingdome. In respect wherof I will compose himnes, to sing henceforward, and to yeld him infinite thanckes for the same.

*Of many other temptations and subtilties, whereby the deuill
tormented him.*

THE LXXIV. CHAPTER.

THe deuils, not content to disturbe him with infinite temptations did also assault him by occasion of sinne, as by the enluyng accident shall appeare. Preaching one day in Apulia, in a church very neere vnto the Pallace of the Emperour Frederick, being as yet vnknewne, many Courtiers were there present, who perceauing him so freeilie to reprehend vices, affirming that whosoever would follow and satisfie his sensuall appetites, could neuer haue part in heauen, they retourning, did scoffingly relate the whole vnto the Emperour, who answered them. These Preachers in deed do say much, but they performe litle. Wherefore I would willingly know if this mā be such a one, lett some one amongst you vndertake to inuite him to supper & lodge with him, and hauing giuen him good entertainment, let him dexterously conuey into his chamber a faire courtesane, to try if he can vse that vertue of continence which he so forcibly preacheth vnto vs. A gentleman did presentlie offer to putt this proiect in practise, for in princes Courtes there want not men that seeke, rather to please their master in these friuolous and sottish toyes, then in matters that concerne the honnour and safety of the soule. This Courtier then, when he had found a time conuenient to the purpose, inuited the holy Father, who simply promised him, his custome being ordinarily to satisfie honest and lawfull requestes. He then went with the said gentleman vnto his house, which he found sumptuously adorned, and being sett at table, did according to his custome eat very litle: after that, at conuenient houre he was brought to a chamber all tapistred, where was a right gorgious bed, and a great fire conformable to the coldnes of the season: the gentleman bidding him good night, wished him to sleepe at his ease: but the holy Father answered him, that this chamber and bed were not proper for a poore begger as himselfe was, for whome the bare ground, or a litle chaffe would suffice: but the gentleman departed without giuing any reply, and subtilly left the chamber dore open; whereby he brought in a verie beautifull damosell, yong, and wittie, and a corrupted Courtesane, to whome he promised great matters, if she could induce this Religious to sinne with her.

She then permitting him to end his prayers, and to couer himselfe at his commoditie, the time seeming to her purpose, went to his bed

Y

side:

*A gentleman
man ha-
uing pro-
mised the
Empe-
rour Fre-
derick
the second
to induce
to sinne
with a
woman,
did repeat
the same
and the
Empe-
rour al-
so.*

side: the S. seeing her on the sodaine, asked her to what end she came thither: wherto she answered: that she came priuately to lye with him, and that she would neuer leaue him till he consented to her desire. S. Francis herevpon rayfing himselfe, said: sith thou art therto resolu'd, be it: but stay a litle, I will prepare our lodging. And hauing with a courageous hart made a short prayer vnto God, he, with the irons that he found one the harth, spread and scattered the most burning coales that were in the fire, and laid himselfe thereon, without receauing any detriment, then inuited the Courtisane, as he had done the More in Egypt. Which the woman seeing, though she were sinfull, began to cry out that she had greiuously offended God, and his seruau't: and falling one her knees demaunded pardon of him. Wherefore they that attended on the steers without the dore to see the successe of their lewd designe, confounded and filled with feare and terrour, repenting their peruerse Counsaile did also aske pardon, and relating all to the Emperour, himselfe sending for the S. did likewise craue his pardon, and requested him to be mindfull of him and his in his deuotions: thus in one instant he subdued the pleasure of the flesh that was lewdly offered him by the woman, and the deuill that had plotted the same, remained conquered, and the Emperour and his Courtiers clearly assured that the S. his life was conformable to his wordes, and finally God was prayed.

Of the great assaults that the deuils gaue S. Francis in solitary places.

THE LXXV. CHAPTER.

THese afflictions which the holy Father endured were doubles very violent: but those which the deuils laid on him in solitary places, where he prayed, were without comparison much greater: for they gaue him a meruailous warre, often appearing vnto him in hideous and loathsome shapes, yea so horrible, that no humane creature had bin able to endure them, if God had not given him force and assistance, and these monsters did sometimes appeare vnto him with such importunity, that they seemed to intend a combatt with him. Brother Giles that was also exceedingly molested by the deuils, did one day demaund of S. Francis if he had seene in the world that, which could not be beheld by any whosoever the space of a *Pater noster*, who answered that the deuill was so loathsome and horrible that no man without the help of God, could behold him the space only of halfe a *Pater noster*. Notwith standing armed with celestial armour,

S. Francis confounded the deuils whensoever they assaulted him.

more, the more they assaulted him, the more courage and valour did he gett, saying: I will defend me, My God, from the fury of these wicked spirittes, vnder the shadow of thy winges and of thy graces. Sometimes, euen being in the desert, he vrged them by these wordes. Ye false and wicked spirittes make boldly what anatomie of me you will, for sure I am you shall doe no more then my God will permitt you, whose creature I am, and for whome I am ready to endure as much tribulation as he will giue me, by your meane. The deuils no longer able to endure this notable constancie, departed vtterly confounded.

S. Francis remainyng one day in a Church of S. Peter, neere to Bologna, desired to repose awhile, to make his prayer afterward. He had scarcely enclined his head, but he began to feeble his ennemies, wherfore making the signe of the crosse, he went out of the Church and said vnto them: yee deuils I coniure you in the name of God the Father almighty, that to this my body you doe what foeuer my God hath permitted you: for I am prepared to endure althinges for his loue, and because I haue no greater ennemie then my body, reuenge me one it: which hauing said, they fled vtterlie confounded.

The rest of this chapter, to obserue the Order of the history, is put in the end of the thirty seauenth chapter of the second booke.

How S. Francis deliuered his Brethren from temptations.

THE LXXVI. CHAPTER.

THUS did S. Francis by the helpe of God obtaine so many victories ouer his ennemies, whereby he had already so terrified them, that he expelled them only by vertue of his name, when he knew it to be to the honour of God. Besides this auctority which God had giuen him, he had also such experience by reason of the continuall combattles which he had with them, that he knew how to counsaile, comfort and applie remedies to his Religious, when they suffered affliction in that kinde, as the sequel of this discourse will giue vs to vnderstand.

A very spirituall Religious and one of the most auncient of the Order, very familiar with S. Francis being afflicted with carnall temptations, by extrauagant imaginations, in such sort as he was

*S. Francis
in spirit
knew
the temptations of
his Religion.*

almost reduced to a desperate point of power to resist them any longer, and on the other side he was exceedingly perplexed to confesse himselfe thereof, so much was shame to expresse such foule and filthy cogitations, now encreased in him: fastinges, abstinences, and prayers, or other spirituall workes did profit him nothing: Neuertheless resisting alwayes to his vttmost, God sent vnto him his seruant S. Francis, who comming to the monasterie where this poore Religious was, he priuately called him and said: Beloued brother, I will not that henceforward you confesse such and such fantasies, wherewith the deuill to this day could neuer preuaile against you, and therefore hereafter feare not, but as often as he shall tempt you, say only thrice the *Pater noster*, and by the mercie of God you shalbe deliuered. The Religious exceedingly amazed at the vertue of S. Francis that knew his very cogitations, was very contentedly satisfied with so sweet and gentle a medicine, wherof making vse, he freed himselfe of the temptations.

Brother Roger de la Marque, a Religious of pious conuersation, was by diuine permissiō, so tempted of the deuils, that he esteemed himselfe forsaken of God: and because no application did auaille him, he resolved to vie this last refuge: I will, said he goe seeke out S. Francis, of whome if I be mildly and with a gracious countenance entertayned, I shall haue hope of Goddes mercy: but if he looke awry vpon me, I will take it for a signe that God hath forsaken me. Hauing thus determined, he tooke his way towards the holy Father, who was at Alsifium in the Bishops house who then was sick, where he had reuelation of all this, wherfore he commanded Brother Leo and Brother Macie to goe meet him and to tell him in his name; that he loued him particularly aboue all other of his Religion: which the said Religious vnderstanding, full of consolation, he fell on his knees with the interior of his hart giuing thanckes to God, for that he neuer abandoneth his seruantes, but doth euer giue eare to the prayers of those that hope in him: and giueth them the helpe of his grace to perseuer in his seruice. Which done, he arose, and with them went to the holy Father, who knowing their comming, arose from the bed where he lay, and comming to him, very tenderly embraced him, & left him not till he was entierly comforted, and then dismissed him, fully satisfied and freed of his temptation.

Brother Angelus was also so greiuously tempted that he durst not be alone in the night, for feare of the deuils: but S. Francis hauing made the signe of the crosse vpon him, enioyned him to goe vp on an high mountaine and with a loud voice to say vnto them: O yee proud deuils, come ye all and doe that vnto me which God hath permitted: which hauing done he neuer after saw any thing that did offend him.

How S. Francis gaue assistance to certaine of his Brethren that were far from him.

THE LXXVII. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis hauing his children alwayes in his hart and in his soule, he merited that as he prayed for them, God did often reueale vnto him the necessities wherinto they were fallen, to the end that by his presence, or sending vnto them, or prayers, he might releiue them. His Vicar one a time holding a chapter, he saw in spirit a Religious that would not acknowledge his fault, to doe penance for it, but did with all possible reasons defend himselfe. S. Francis called a Religious and said vnto him: Brother, behold how the deuill sitteth one the shoulders of that poore Religious and holdeth him by the throte halfe choaked, because I haue prayed to God for him, and he hath heard me, and bid him humble himselfe to his Vicar, and tell him the deuill henceforward shall haue no power of him. Which the Religious hauing done, the other full of contrition fell at the feet of the Vicar, acknowledged his fault, did penance, and merited thenceforward to liue very piously.

*S. Franc.
assisted a
Religious
whome
the deuill
choaked.*

Brother Leo being exceedingly oppressed & afflicted by diuers temptations of the deuill S. Francis sent him a letter such as the said Brother Leo then desired, who att the very instant that he had read it, was deliuered: the contentes wherof were thus: God hold and bleesse & tourne his face to thee, God be mercifull to thee, and giue thee his peace, Brother Leo, God giue thee his benediction, So be it. The which wordes taken out of the booke of Numbers of the benedictions of God, were of such efficacy, that they deliuered all those from temptations to whome the S. in writing sent them.

*Brother
Leo was
deliuered
from a
temptatiō
by a let-
ter from
S. Franc.*

God permitted S. Francis, being one day att our Lady of Angels, to see a great multitude of deuils that endeauoured to enter there, which they could not doe till a Religious began to conceaue hatred against one of his Brethren, which did so breed in his hart that they entred into his body and possessed him: which S. Francis perceauing (as a pittifull Pastour of his sheep, called the Religious and reprehended him for the hatred he boare to his brother: wherat he being exceedingly amazed that S. Francis knew it, did acknowledge the vertue that God gaue him, and put away that hatred, and thus was consequentlie freed of his ennemy.

*S. Franc.
knew in
spirit the
vices and
defects
of his Re-
ligious.*

How he deliuered Brother Ruffinus from a vehement temptation.

THE LXXVIII. CHAPTER.

Brother Ruffinus the companion of S: Francis was one time so extremely and cruelly tempted, with a temptation of diffidence of predestination, that I doubt whether there could be a greater, whence may be collected what slightes the deuill doth vse, to seeke the ruine of the most perfect, if God did not exceedingly assit them. Brother Ruffinus was a Religious of a pious and holy conuersation, and of very deepe contemplation; wherefore the deuill hauing tempted him with diffidence of predestination, made it seeme vnto him that all the labours, troubles and afflictions which he endured were lost, with the time which he vnprofitably spent in Religion, by reason that he was not predestinate vnto glory: which temptation augmenting, though he omitted not to conuerse with his Brethren, did neuertheles make him exceeding sorrowfull. And because he was fearfull and ashamed to discouer it to any one, the deuill by diuine permission did tempt him more and more. Wherefore assaulting him both exteriorly and interiorly, he one time appeared vnto him in forme of a crucifix, that seeming to haue compassion on him, said: Poore man why doest thou afflict thee with so many abstinences without fruit? what auaille thee so many prayers? sith all the world together cannot chaunge that which from all eternity hath bin ordained by the prouidence of my Father: wherby thou art not of the number of the predestinate, but of the reprobate. Wherefore I am moued with compassion of thy so great sufferance: that att least thou begin not thy hell during thy life, and albeit I haue already diuers time inspired thee interiorly: I am now content to appeare vnto thee such as I am, and by mine ordinary clemencie to assure thee of that which onlie I doe know, sith onlie I doe damne and saue, which I doe to putt thee out of all doubt, and to the end thou no longer beleuee that other damned also, that sonne of Bernardone, who shall goe to hell with his Father, and all they that follow him shalbe deceaued. And after these wordes he vanished, leauing the poore Brother Ruffinus in such heauines (a miserie that doth prostrate and ouerthrow the greatest seruants of God) and in his spirit so shadowed by the great princes of darcknes, that he was euen ready to loose the faith he had in God and in his holy seruant:

to

to whome notwithstanding the aforesaid, he imparted nothing of his affliction.

But the holie Father being by diuine reuelation aduertised ther- *S. Franc.*
of, and seeing the perill wherinto his so deerly beloued brother *deliuered*
was fallen, he sent for him by Brother Macie as farre as the mount *B. Ruffi-*
Subasio, where he remayned in a celle separated from other: to *mus of a*
whome, hauing vnderstood the message, he rudely answered: That *most grei-*
he had nothing to doe with S. Francis: by which wordes Brother Ma- *nous rep-*
cie esteeming that he might be deluded by the deuill, amiably replied *tation*
saying. Oh God, brother Ruffinus what wordes haue you vttered? are *discon-*
you besides your selfe? or doe you yeeld to be deluded by the deuill? *ring vnto*
Know you not that S. Francis is an Angel of heauen on earth? Is it not *him the*
knowne vnto vs how many millions of soules God hath saued & will *delusion*
saue by his meanes: how he hath illuminated the world, and how *of the*
much our selues perticularly are by him illuminated? howsoeuer sith he *deuill.*
hath expresly sent for you, I will that you repaire vnto him, because
indeed I know that you are exceedingly deluded by the deuill.

Brother Ruffinus being by these wordes att length perswaded, with-
out farther reply went with him, and came to S. Francis: in whose
presence appearing, the deuill lost his prey. For after he had recounted
vnto the S. all the circumstances of his temptation by order, and had
receaued demonstrations of the S. to witt that the deuill did harden
the hearts of men, and God on the contrary did soften and mollifie the, *Ezechia*
himselfe saying: I will take from thee thy heart of stone, and will giue *39.*
thee one of flesh, acknowledging the extreme hardnes which the
deuill had left in his heart, and with all vnderstanding in one instant
all his slighes, with abondance of teares he vttered his fault and co-
fessed his sinne in concealing his temptation S. Francis then said vnto
him: My sonne, goe make thy confelsion frequent prayer, and know for
certaine that this réptation, as thou shalt breifely experience, shall tour-
ne to no lesse peace and spirituall ioy. And if this horrible deuill retour-
ne to tempt thee, vse these wordes vnto him: Thou base and loath-
some deuill, open wide thy lying mouth, that I may fill it full of filth.
Thus Brother Ruffinus retourning to his said mountaine and celle the-
re to lament his passed error, Satan presented himselfe vnto him in for-
me of IESVS CHRIST crucified, and said did I not forbid thee
to beleue Brother Francis? But brother Ruffinus interrupted his
wordes, and answered: Thou loathsome and lying deuill, open that
thy mouth, where our issue such horrible lyes, that I may fill it with vi-
lany: which the false and proud deceauer hearing departed, making such a
terrible ruine of the stones of the montaine which he threw downe by
grosse heapes hurling the with such impetuosity, that the stones & flintes

tum-

tumbling downe stroake fire against each other: breifely it seemed that the mountaine was entierly to be ouer-thrown or suncken.

This storme was heard euen to the place where S. Francis was, who with his companions went out to see whence proceeded this terrible noyse. They were all exceedingly terrified, S. Francis excepted, who incontinently imagined the cause. In the meane while Brother Rufinus returned victorious from so tedious & bitter a combatt, who by experience knowing this illusion, came to S. Francis to whome to the great ioy and contentement of all the hearers he recounted all the successe. He being returned to his cell, the true Crucifix incontinentlie appeared vnto him, and said: Thou hast done well, Brother Rufinus, to take the counsaile of Francis, who hath discovered vnto thee the fraud of the deuill: and therefore henceforward, in consideration of the affliction which thou hast endured in this temptation, I giue thee this grace that whiles thou liuest, thou shalt be no more afflicted by the deuill: then blessing him he disappeared: whervpon he was according to the prophesie of the holy Father so comforted, and replenished with such sweetnes and seruour of spiritt, that his soule was often ravished and eleuated in God: and so he liued and died in this perfect v-nion of his loue.

Of the humility that shined in this Saint.

THE LXXIX. CHAPTER.

IT being vnderstood, that the holy Father had obtayned a right glorious victory ouer the deuill, in himselfe and his: for he only is vanquished that presumeth of himselfe, and the humble (as little fishes) escape out of the nettes, we will now consider by what meane the S. became so admirably victorious ouer those proud and rebellious spirittes. It was in deed by no other meane then by his humility, wherwith he did not only surmount their cruell assaultes, but they being vnable long time to endure him, he putt them to flight; it alone being the guard, beauty, and the mother of all other vertues, aboue all which, it shined in him & gaue light as in the persō of him that would be the least of all his brethren, and one that freely acknowledged himselfe the greatest sinner of sinners, and reputed himselfe no other then a vessell full of ordure: and not (as indeed he was) an elected vessell, full of sanctity and very resplendant, by the lustre of so great vertues and singuler graces, wherein all perfection appeared as in a very beautifull & cleare glasse. Now on this vertue of humility, he laboured to found and build all his holy and worthy edifice, affirming that I E S V S CHRIST
descen-

descended not into the world, from the bosome of his eternall Father, nor was vested with our so contemptible flesh for other end but (hauing redeemed vs) to teach vs both by word and effect as a true master of humility, what himselfe said: Learne of me because I am meeke and humble of hart: therfore he as his imitatur endeauoured to be of no respect, first in his owne sight, and then before others, fearing least it should befall vnto him as it is writtē, that he which is high before men, is abominable before God; for which cause he accustomed to say vnto his Religious: A man is so great as he appeareth to be before God, and no greater: and therfore it is a great vanity to glory in the honours of the world. He also reioyced when any iniury or reproch was done him, and receaued prayles and honours discontentedly, being better pleased with reprehension then with flattery: because said he, by reprehension he learned to humble and correct himselfe, whereas it was an ouer excessiue vanity to heare ones selfe praysed. And with all he endeauoured to conceale the giftes which he receaued of God, forbearing to discouer that which might occasion him to fall or offend.

Matt. 11.

Luc. 16.

Being one day called S. call me no more S. said he, for as yet I may haue children, and no man ought to be praysed, till he haue perseuered vnto the end, which to vs is vncertaine; besides, no glory is to be giuen to what soeuer is done by a sinner: A sinner may fast, lament, and discipline his flesh, but he cannot doe it alone and of himselfe. The principall is that he be faithfull vnto his God, wherof only he should glorifie: which he shall doe, if in his seruitude, he attribute all the good he shall doe, vnto God, from whome doe proceed and are deriued vnto vs, all graces and perfections, as from the true Father of all our consolations.

Of the loue and zeale be had in humility.

THE LXXX. CHAPTER.

Discourfing one day with his brethren, he said: I cannot repute my selfe a Freer Minor, If I proue not this that followeth in my selfe: I purpose to goe to the chapter, where shalbe assembled all the Religious who will receaue me with great reuerence as their superiour: afterward, lett them pray me to comfort them, explicating vnto them the word of God, which for their satisfaction performing, lett them all arise and say: Hold they peace, we well haue thee no longer for Superiour, for thou art an idiot, block-head, and ignorant: and with all knowest not what thou sayest, wherfore it is ouer great shame to haue such a superiour; then be it that you detrude me out of the

*Spiritual
mortifi-
cations
of S. Fr.*

chapter with vtter dishonour, as deseruing the same: I would not (I say), esteeme me a good Freer Minor, if I did not support all that with the same promptitude and ioy, as if I heard my selfe prayfed: for if I reioyce att honours, what profit reape I therby? I putt my soule in perill of vaine glory without hope of any benefit: but if I be contemned, my soule is therby secured and profiteth in spirit. In regard of his exceedingly zeale vnto this humility, when it happened that any prayfed him, either for his preaching, or vpon any other occasion, he commanded his companion, to contrary it, and to giue him wordes of dispraise: which doing, though vnwillingly, the holy Father would answere; God blesse you, because you speake the truth, and that which the sonne of Peter Bernardone doth deserue.

*Prooue
of the
humility
of S. Fr.*

Being one day att out lady of Angels, Brother Macie had a desire to trie the humility of S. Francis, though he were his perticuler freind, onely because he knew it would be gratefull vnto him. Being then in his preience, he twice iterated these wordes: Wherefore to you? wherefore to you? as if he would inferre: Francis, wherefore doe people so much honour you? The holie Father smilingie answered: What meane you by that brother Macie? All the world (replyed brother Macie) runneth after you, euery one desireth to see you, to heare and obey you: and for any thing that I know, you are neither personable, learned, eloquent, nor noble, whence is it then the world doth follow you? The S. then vested with his accustomed humilitie, hauing lifted his eyes to heauen, and a litle prayed and thanked God, thus answered his deere freind: Will you know, Brother Macie, whence it proceedeth that, as you say, such resort of people doe follow me and willinglie heare me? This proceedeth of the eyes of the great omnipotent God which in all places beholding both the good and bad, hath pleased to choose me as the most simple and vilest sinner in the world: for God doth choose the most feeble and infirme things, with them to confound the noble, potent, strong, and worldlie wise: that the glorie may be his alone, and that the creature being in presence of his Creatour may haue nothing, whereof to glory. An answere doubteles more then humane and descending from heauen, where the spirit of this holy Father learned of that high and potent God, who hath euer his eyes fixed on the humble of spirit, as likewise the most sacred virgin learned, when she answered to the prayes of S. Elizabeth by these wordes: My soule doth prayse God, because he hath beheld the humilitie of his hand maid.

1. Cor. 1.

Psal. 66.

Luc. 1.

Hol^y S. Francis reputed him selfe the greatest sinner of the world

THE LXXXI. CHAPTER.

THat the more he humbled himselfe on earth, the more he was exalted in heauen, was manifested vnto Brother Ruffinus in a reuelation whiles he was praying: for being rapt in spirit, he saw an high and eminent place in heauen, wherein was the Order of Seraphins, and among them a seat void farre more resplendent then any other, and all couered with precious stones. Wherevpon with exceeding admiration he demaunded for whome that seat was prepared, and he heard a voice that said: this seat was one of the principall Seraphins, that fell into hell, and now it is reserued for the right humble Francis. After this vision, Brother Ruffinus had an extreme desire to know wherein principally consisted that so great humility which was so meritorious in the blessed Father saint Francis: hauing therefore some discourse one day with him he said: My beloued Father, I hartely beseeche you to tell me certainly what is your owne esteeme and what opinion you haue of your selfe. Saint Francis answered: Verily I hold my selfe for the greatest sinner of the world, and to serue God lesse then any other. Brother Ruffinus replied vnto him: that he did not thinck he could speake the same sinterily and with a cleare conscience; it being so that others, as was apparent, did committ many greiuous sinnes, wherof by the grace of God he was innocent. To this S. Francis answered: If God had with so great mercy fauoured those others of whome you speake, I am assured that how soeuer wicked and detestable they may be now, they would farre more gratefully acknowledge the giftes of God, then I doe and would serue him much better. And if my God should now forsake me, I should perpetrate more enormities then any other. In regard therefore of this ineffable grace done vnto me, I accuse and acknowledge my selfe to be the greatest sinner that is. Brother Ruffinus by this answere was thoroughly confirmed in the vision which God had shewed vnto him, hauing found good demonstration of the merit of the holy Fathers humility.

*A vision
of Br.
Ruffinus
of the
future
glory of
S. Franc.
for his
humility.*

But because humility ought alwayes to haue verytie for foundation, it seemeth one may make a sufficient reply to this his answere and not without reason. For some one might thus argument: Most holy Father tell me if you please, by the excessiue loue which in this world you haue borne to the humble Iesus Christ, and att this present more the euer doe

*Objection
of the
author,
and his
solution.*

beare

bear him: where haue you learned, that if an other sinner had receaued or should receaue the talent of grace which God hath giuen you, that he would more acknowledge it, and make better profit therof then you haue done? Vpon what reason, vpon what doctrine, and on what spiritt is grounded the foundation of this feeble opinion which you seeme to haue of your selfe? For I firmly beleue that if God had knowne it, he would neuer haue bestowed this grace on you, but rather on that other. The most humble Father to this obiection might well answere, that he had learned it of the doctrine of our Sautiour I E S V S C H R I S T, who with his mouth hath said, The spiritt breatheth where he will; and of S. Paul, that neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but he that giueth the inerease, God: wherof he might thus inferre: I not being Francis, without God that worcketh in me, when he had pleased to inspire an other, there is no doubt but he had done the like, and euen more according to his grace. And wheras you beleue, that if God had giuen it to an other, it had bin knowne that he had done this or more, your beleefe is false: for as the same S. Paul saith, it is in the power of the Potter, to frame one pott for honour, and an other for dishonour, one for vse of meat, and an other to serue for the chamber. Neuertheles it would be ridiculous, for the vessell to complaine, and say: why is this honour giuen to him rather then to me? for thus it hath pleased him, because he is the master.

*A worthy
discourse
of humi-
lity.*

Cant. 1.

But he might farther, and with much more reason alleadge the saying of the Elpouse: Consider me not nor doe not admire that I am black, because the sunne hath taken away my collour: which hath no other signification, but that one should not beleue that this great deformity (which the humble presupposeth in himselfe) doth proceed of what loeuer cause indifferently, but that the sunne of iustice, the liuing God, maketh it appeare so foule vnto his eyes: and not the light of the Moone, which is worldly wisdom. And this, I say, proueth, not that he maketh the faire, foule in essence, but in apparence only, by comparailon made of a thing imperfectly faire, with an other beautifull in the highest degree. It being supposed then that I haue yet in me some good (as it may be) neuertheles when I fix mine eyes on that diuine sunne of iustice, I am enforced and constrained to behold the great multitude of sunne motes of mine imperfections in his cleare beames, when reflecting as one ought, I know my basenes and mine imperfection to be infinite, and to become as a nothing in this mine accident all beauty. But because that which is true cannot be otherwise: I retourne and reenter into my selfe, where considering the greatnes of my naturall basenes, I acknowledge nothing in my selfe but the grace of God that doeth

*The an-
swere.*

Iohn. 3.

1. Cor. 3.

Rom. 9.

doeth any thing: because as man, there is no sinne but I might haue committed. In which respect I ought to humble my selfe, and beleene that touching this point there is no man in the world, any way inferiour vnto me. This equality layd, the force of humility doth after enter into his meritt: whereas among men we are all naturally equall in imperfections: therefore the truly humble doth honour and repute all other as greater then himselfe, and that is the black colour, which the Sunne of his grace doth by his goodnes giue him, with which humilitie God himselfe (made man) being cloathed, said: I am not a man, but a worme, the contempt of men and out-cast of the people. And if **I E S V S C H R I S T** spake this of himselfe, who is the mouth of trueth, who can euer contemne a man and say that he doth falsely esteeme himselfe lesse then other men. And therefore God doth farther say: learne of me because I am meek and humble of hart; learne of me, saith he, because he knew that proud humane ignorance, could not conceaue, I will not say teach, this doctrine more then humane by its apparent and sophisticall reasons. But learne of me, to wit, what God is, and what is man: for I being the one and the other together, none can better know the my selfe, what difference there is betweene thes two. Now of this consideratiō proceedeth true and perfect humility, and therefore it is greater in the blessed that clearly see the Sunne of iustice in his splendours, then in themselves walking in the pilgrimage of this world, wherein by faith and imperfect charity they receaue the diuine beames only by reuerberation and reflection in the cloud of their imperfection: and therefore the nerer the true seruant approacheth vnto him with the vnderstanding, the more humble he is. So, as the glorious virgin Mary was the most humble of all creatures on earth, euen so is she most humble of all in heauen, though she be att the right hand of her Sonne: because the more she doth participate of that diuine and infinite light, and doth more clearly and with greater glory contemplate that lo great depth of the infinite and high diuine bounty, so much better doth she see the goulfe of her littleness, which in the end is to be a creature, which is nothing in comparison of her Creatour, before whome she bendeth her knees with farie more reuerence then euer did the foure and twenty ancientes, whome S. Iohn saw prostrate before the throne of the liuing God, because she hath a deeper knowledge of him then they. Therefore lett all humane reason be silent, mute, and giue place in the certaine contemplation of true diuine humilitie, sith it cannot penetrat the deep secretes of God, by meane wherof, with a most miraculous operation it then raiseth a soule more high, when it most debaseth her to the profundity of her consideration, and then it procureth her

Psal. 21.

Matt. 11.

Apoc. 4.

What
humility
is.

a crowne in heauen, and maketh her true Queene in that eternall kingdome, when it causeth her to be inferiour, slaue, and subiect to all creatures for the only loue of God, which being her foundation, it is not to be admired if her building arise to such an hight. For humilitie is no other thing then a profound and continual humiliatiō of the soule vnto his diuine Maistie, caused by his diuine liberality. And therefore she ought duely to consider with what benignity his maiesty vnited himselfe vnto vs, receauing into him our so base and abiect nature, wherof he would make vse to raise and relieue our so extreme povertie: of this knowledge will grow and encrease in the soule the true loue and approbation of the obligation we haue vnto God. It cannot be exprest how insatiable a thing it is to desire alwayes to correspond vnto IESVS CHRIST, in worckes, misprising ones selfe for his loue, and euer desirously giuing eare vnto the foresaid voice. Learne of me, by the true doctrine whereof there arriueth vnto the soule by such a humility, subiection, not only vnto God and his commandementes, but euen, for his loue vnto all creatures, and she reputeth them her betters and superiours, though they be sinners, hauing iher eye only one her basenes or lownes, which is such, as cannot be greater. So misprising her selfe to the vtmost, she faith with her Lord IESVS CHRIST. I am a worme, and not a man, the contempt of men, and the out cast of the people. By which wordes the question is cleared and resolved.

Of the discourses and exercises of the humility of S. Francis.

THE LXXXII. CHAPTER.

THe said holy Father would not haue any thing in his Religion, were it neuer so excellent, but it should in its kinde, euen exteriourlie preach Lowlinesse and Humilitie. Wherefore he reiected the title of preacher of Pennance, which Pope Innocent the third had graunted to him and his, and would that his Religion should be called Minors, and that they should conserue them selues, liuing like Minors, as true children of the Apostolicall rule. And for the same cause he would not that the superiours should be called Priors, but Ministers and seruantes: (A name imposed by IESVS CHRIST, in the gospell, when he said, that he was come to serue) to the end that by such a surname, they might be alwayes mindfull both of their office and of their author IESVS CHRIST. He would also that they should be called

Matt. 20.

called Guardians, that they might guard their Brethren. Then also he would that his Religious should rather conuerse with the poore then with the rich and potent of the world. And to conserue them in humilitie, he exercised them to sweepe the house, wash dishes, dresse meat, and to serue the leapers and diseased in hospitals, and in althings to renounce their proper will. For though he were Generall, he notwithstanding did nothing of his owne head, he consulted with the, or more often with God in prayer, who reuealed vnto him what he should doe, both for himselfe and others. He was not ashamed to learne of the least, the smallest matter that was, as being a true Minor. He had also learned high and worthy matters of his soueraigne master IESVS CHRIST, yea the principall philosophy. Whiles he liued he alwayes desired to learne of the learned and of the simple, of the perfect and imperfect, of the great and litle, the meane wherby he might become perfect and the true seruant of IESVS CHRIST. He was thanckfull to the most simple and abieft that taught him any thing, yea so farre forth as to kneele vnto them.

Once when he was very sicke, and being desirous to visitt an oratory, and to that end mounted one an asse, he mett by the way an old country man that laboured on the land, who seing him, forbore his labour and asked his companion if that were not the famous Francis, who was so much spoken of: and he answered that it was. Tournig then to S. Francis he said, Brother, endeauour with all thy possibilitie to be vertuous as thou art generally reputed: for many haue a strong beleefe in thy person. Behaue thy selfe therfore in such sort that there be nothing in thee but what is expected. The holy Father then descended from his asse, and falling on his knees thancked and kissed the feet of the country man, for the charitable admonition which he had giuen him.

S. Francis very humbly thancked a country man that admonished him.

Of the constancie and courage of S. Francis, and in what manner he exercised and proued the Nouices in humilitie and obedience.

THE LXXXIII. CHAPTER.

AS the holy Father obeyed the good counsaile of the most simple man that was, so when on the contrary their aduise was diabolically, he would neuer coudiscend vnto them, therein discovering the constancie & vertue of his courage, as it appeared by the counsaile which the Card. of Hostia would giue him in behalfe of the

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*How
contra-
giously S.
Francis
refused
the coun-
sailes &
enterpri-
ses that
were co-
trary to
his pro-
fession.*

the principall of his order, inserted in the 65. chapter precedent. Wherin he demonstrated that against the supreme counsaile of God, one ought not to admitt the aduice of men, wherfore he would neuer consent, that the Order which had so strictly began should in any sort be mitigated. Which he manifested yet more when he was earnestly perswaded to permitt his Religious to accept of benefices and temporall goodes, wherewith to supply their necessities: wherto he would neuer accord, knowing well what scandall the seculers would receaue therat, who would thinck that the Religious were admitted into his Order rather for some benefitt and temporall commodity, then by zeale of sauing their soules: beside the occasiō which might be giue them to erre frō that first naked pouerty: these kind of matters excepted, he permitted himselfe, in all the rest (provided that it were not contrary to God or the Order) to be gouerned as others would, renouncing his owne will, euen as he procured his other Religious to renounce theirs, and to submit themselues to that of their superiour. S. Francis laid so sure a foundation on this vertue of humility, that for loue of it he affected obedience and pouerty her daughters: by obedience he particularly proued what Nouises were fitt for his Order, and what not: as he practised on two yong men, who desired the habitt, whome he tryed after this strange manner.

*What
prompti-
tude and
simplicity
S. Franc.
desired in
the obe-
dience of
his Reli-
giours.*

He brought them into a garden, where he commanded them to assist him to transplant colewortes, as he did, he began to plant the leaues into the earth and the rootes vp into the aire, where vpon one of them reasoned the matter with the S. saying: No, Father, it must not be done so but cleene contrary. The S. replied, doe as I doe and question no more: but the yong man not conceauing the vertue of God, and esteeming it folly would not doe it: wherfore the holy Father said vnto him: Brother, I perceauē you are a great master, and therefore vnfit for my Order: and so he dismissed him, and to the other that had done as he did, he presently gaue the habitt. And because he was neuer sufficiently to his contentment exercised in this his vertue of humility, he one day said vnto his Religious, that praying God to voutsaue to manifest vnto him when he was his true seruant, and when not: God had answered him that he was his true seruant when he thought, spake, or did any thing concerning his seruice. And therefore Brethren, said he, touning to them, I now pray you, when you shall see me faile therein, to reprehend me publikely and shame me. He would neuer permitt himselfe to be priuiledged more then an other in matters of honour, nor in any other particulers, that might procure him contentment, in worldly matters, in sicknesses, or in iorneyes, wherein where there was assigned companions vnto him for his ease, he would in no sort permitt it, answering, that he would not haue that singuler prerogatiue, and that it sufficed him

him to be accompanied from place to place, as God should inspire him. And said he, were it not inconuenient for Religious to goe alone, hauing seene a blinde man guided by a litle dogge, I would no more haue any person with me, because I would not appeare more then hee esteemed it an honour and glory to be estranged from this singularity of honours and commodities.

Of the subiection and humility, wherin S. Francis would that his Religious should liue, vnder the holy Romaine church, with their obedience vnto Preistes.

THE LXXXIV. CHAPTER.

HE would that his disciples should be subiect to the holy Catholique Romaine church, and that they should also shew themselves humble and obedient to the Preistes thereof, and for the greater confirmation of this point, he left his Religion, so recommendable vnto the church. And goinge the second time to Rome for confirmation of his Rule, he said to his Religious: I goe to recommend this Order to the Church, of which I will that the euill be punished, and the children of obedience be fauoured for their good; and therefore, when the children shall know the sweet benefitt of their mother, they will alwayes with a singuler deuotion follow her doctrine: and one the contrary, he that wilbe a child of Baal and of disobedience, shall not remaine vnpunished, nor liue in the Order, vnder the wings of her protection. The holy church wil maintaine the glory of our pouer-ty, and will not permitt the beautie of humillity to be destroyed, by the smoake of vanity, pride, and ambition, and will conserue in you the bondes of peace and charity, seuerlie reprehending and chasticing those that shall diuide themselves from her rule and vertue, that it perpetually florish in the obseruance of euangelicall purity, in her presence, and God will not permitt it to loose the sweet odour which he hath giuen it. Such was the intention of S. Francis, to subiect his Religious vnto the Catholike church, ordaining that they should alwayes chioose a Cardinall of it for their protectour, as a thing that he knew to be necessary for the good of the Order. He did not intend that they should be subiect to the said protectour only; but likewise to all Prelates and Preistes of the Church, saying thus: Know ye that we are called Coadiutours of Preistes and Religious, for sauing of soules: and therefore lett the church be in that sort assisted by vs, and her holy faith augmented; I euer vnderstood the Bishop of Afsisium his speech to tend thereto, when att the beginning of my conuersion, he ad-

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monished me to gouerne my selfe discretely, that in these turbulent times, myne Order did not mount his hornes, and proue disobedient vnto the Church, therefore I euer did; and will that others doe cary a speciall reuerence to the Prelates, and Religious therof.

Further, considering that there is nothing more gratefull to God then the saluation of soules, as S. Paul saith, the same shalbe better accomplished by the peace and amity of good Religious, then by their discordes: and therefore if any among them seeke to hinder it, I will not that you contradict the same, but that you leaue the care to God, and lett it suffice you to be subiect vnto them, and on your part to liue so virtuously that by your occasion there arise no discordes or debates among you, which doeing, you shall in one same instant gaine vnto God, the Clergie, Religion, and the people: which shalbe more gratefull to his diuine Maiesty, then to gaine only the people: endeaour therefore not to scandalize the Clergie, but as much as is possible, conceale their defectes, and supply where they seeme to haue failed. For recompense herof it is, that the holy church in his praise doth sing this solemne antheme: Francis the Religious Catholique, and a man entierly Apostolique; taught Christians to obserue, defend, and formally beleue the faith of the Romane Church, and that Preistes were to be reuerenced aboue all others.

The Clergy must be supported.

How much S. Francis would that his Religious should honour Preistes.

There were heretofore very few preists in the couents of the Freer Minors & why.

When he sent his Religious ouer the world, one of the documentes which he gaue them, was that when they mett a Preist, they should incontinently fall on their knees before him, kisse his hand, and aske his benediction: and in case so happening, should sweepe the Church, and should rest and lodge rather with them then otherwhere. He besides affirmed that if he mett a S. descended from heauen to earth, and a Preist, he would first kisse the hand of the Preist, and then would doe reuerence to the S. by reason that of the former receauing the body of our lord IESVS GHRIST, he in that respect meritted there more honour. In regard of this dignity which he acknowledged in them, and for the reuerence which he preached that each one should beare vnto the, he would not be Preist, but Deacon and the seruauut of Preistes. This his example was of such force, that att the beginning of the establisment of his Order, and in the reformation of the obseruance, his Religious did exceedingly prise Preist-hood, yea did shunne to be Preistes: so that in a Couent full of Religious, there were very few Preistes, all endeaouring to mount to diuine communicatiō, rather by meane of prayer, humility, and simplicity, then by high degrees, and dignities without merit.

How

How saint Francis by his humility, did edifie and conuert his neighbour.

THE LXXXV. CHAPTER.

IT is not then to be admired, if this holy Father exercised humilitie, not only that his soule might be pleasing vnto God, who is ennemy to the proude, and most liberall of grace, towardes the humble, but also that by meane of it, he might edifie his neighbour, and conuert soules vnto God, by way of humility pourchasing that which otherwise he could not haue obtayned, as for example: Arriuing one day att Imola there to preach, and hauing demaunded leaue of the Bishop, he gaue him answere that himselfe could sufficiently discharge the office of preaching vnto his people. The holy Father therfore bowing downe his head, departed; but being afterward inspired of God, he retourned thither; the Bishop seeing him, very rigourously asked him what he did, and what he sought there; S. Francis very humbly answered him that if a sonne were by his Father driuen out att one dore, the naturall loue which he boare him would constrain him to enter againe att an other. Which the bishop hearing, being overcome with his humility, he embraced him, saying: that himselfe and all his Religious should thenceforward with a generall licence freely preach ouer all his bishopperick, because humility deserued it. I know hereby, added he, that it is no meruaile, if humility encline the will of man, sith it enforceth euen the omnipotent diuine will to condescend to the desires of the humble, as the Angel said to Iacob: If thou hast bin strong against God, how much more shalt thou preuaile against men? The holy Father then with this arme of humility deliuered many soules out of the handes of the deuill, and out of the throat of hell, as we haue seene and by the example following shall appeare.

Certainne Religious ministring vnto a leaper, as S. Francis had commaunded them, could not by any gracious vsage whatsoeuer, giue him contentment; nor, besides the iniuries which he vttered against them, and the buffettes which he gaue them, all which they contentedly endured, could procure him to forbear to blaspheme against God and his SS. being therunto induced by the deuill and by the extreme violence of his diseale. These good Religious vnable to support those blasphemies, that were so horrible as would haue made an Infidell to tremble, they went to the holy Father, who in person resolved to visit him. And entring into the chamber of the sicke, he said: My Brother

A Bishop refusing to permit S. Francis to preach in his diocese was at length constrained by his humility to accord vnto him. Gen. 32.

God giue thee his peace, and he answered: What peace can I haue, sith from the time that God did interiously and exteriorly deprive me of it, I haue euer bin in cruell warre? S. Francis comforting him, replied: My Brother and Freeind, you must haue patience: for these afflictions which you endure in body wil auaille to the saluation of your soule, if you patientlie support them. But the leaper answered: how can I possibly haue patience, considering that myne afflictions are so permanent that they permitt me no ease day, nor night, and besides your Religious doe exceedingly aggrauate the greife of mine infirmity: for not onlie they doe not alsist and serue me, but they afflict me euen to death. The holy Father knowing by diuine inspiration, that this wretch was tourmented by the deuill: went presentlie to offer his prayers for him, which done, he retourned and said vnto him: Goe to, my good freind sith these Religious doe not serue you well, I will serue you my selfe. The Leaper answered: Tell me I pray, what will you doe more then they? the S. replied, I will doe whatloeuere you shall cammand me, begin from this instant to tell me what you please to haue and I promise to doe it. I will, said the leaper, that you wash all my body, for I cannot endure the filthy sauour therof. I will most willingly doe it, answered the S. and sodenly caused to be prepared a bath of verie pleasing hearbes, then discloathed him to his skinne, and washed him, one of the Religious powring water on his body.

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But there hapened a notable miracle, whiles the holy Father with his pitifull handes washed him, all the scurfes of his leapy one after another fell off, so that the flesh remayned cleane and neat as of a litle child: in fine, he was entierly cleansed and cured within and without. The diseased person therfore knowing this great miracle, began very bitterly to lament, saying: I am worthy not of one, but of a thousand helles, as well for hauing blasphemed against God, as for the contempts, iniuries, and buffettes, wherby I haue offended your poore Religious, that so louingly haue ministred vnto me. And after his cure he remayned fiftene dayes in this lamentation, then he made a generall confession, imploring the ayd of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. S. Francis left him not till fearing himselfe, for the great concourse of people that repayred to this miracle, he was constrained to depart, so leauing the man in the grace of God, who shortly after passed from this world into an other. And incontinentlie, the holie Father being in prayer, he appeared vnto him in heauen more bright then the sunne, and said: Father, know you me? The S. asked him, who are you? And he answered, I am the soule of that leaper whome liuing in the world, God cured by your prayers and humility. I now enter into the kingdome of glory, for which I giue than-

thianckes to God and you, blessed be your wordes and your actions also, whereby many soules in the world are saued. Know that there passeth no day, but the Angels and SS. in heauen giue glorie and prayse to God, for the innumerable fruites which by your meane and your Order are procured in the Church: and therefore perseuer to the time predestinated to your great crowne: hauing said thus much, he disappeared, leauing the S. exceedingly comforted, who gaue thanckes to God for all, and particulerly for the sauing of that soule, who was in such imminent perill of damnation.

Of three famous theeues conuerted by the humility and charity of S. Francis, the eight chapter, of the tenth booke, transferred to this place as most proper vnto it.

THE LXXXVI. CHAPTER.

BRother Angelus being Gardian att Mount Casal, three famous theeues haunted that place, doeing cruell murders thereabout, who being one day oppressed with hungar, came to him demanding somewhat to eat. The good Guardian knowing them, not only refused to giue them almose, but began to check and reprehend them: alleadging that they feared not God nor men whome they so miserablie slew, liuing by the labours of others, and leading a life more diabolicall then humane, robbing, dishonouring, tormenting and cutting the throates of their neighbour as they did, and that he admired how the earth did sustaine them, that it did not swallow them quick as they were: and so bad them hast away, and withall rudely shutt the dore against them, wherevpon they in extreme choller departed. S. Francis a litle after came with one of his companions vnto that place, to whome the Guardian recounted the precedent; whereto the holy Father answered, that he had done very ill, because such sinners retourne to God and are conuerted, rather by sweet and pittifull wordes, then by such reprehensions which did rather harden them, and that therfore God said, They that are in health, need not a Phisition, but they that are ill att ease, & that he came not to call the iust, but sinners to repentance. And therfore, added he because you haue done against charity, the commandemēt of the gospels, & the example of IESVS CHRIST, I command you in vertue of obedience, for penitance to cary them to the mountaine where they are, this loafe of bread & this flagon of wine, which was giuen vs by the way, & when you come in their presence, fall one your knees at their feet, and aske the pardō for the wordes you haue spoken: & when

they haue taken the bread, entreat them in my behalfe to leaue that miserable kinde of life, and I will prouide for all their necelsities, and vse all the art you can deuise to induce them hither. The most obedient Guardian presentlie went on, and the holy father in the meane while went to the Church to pray for them, whence he departed not till God had heard him.

Brother Angelus comming to the theeues, and hauing performed the commandement of S. Francis, whiles they did eat the bread, one of them said to the others; Alas what shall become of vs sottish wretches, what must be our lott, what horrible torments are prepared for vs in hell, for so many thestes and murders. as we daylie perpetrat? neither yet haue we any scruple, much lesse feare of God, or repentance for so many enormous sinnes. And this Religious who hath brought vs to eat, is come thus farre, with so great humility to aske vs pardon for one only word iustlie vttered vnto vs, admonishing vs according to our desert, in the meane while we wretched theeues and detestable robbers, neuer demaund pardon of God. Besides this he hath shewen vs charity praying vs to repaire to that holy Father, who hath sent vs releefe, who for the zeale he hath of our soules, doth so freelie offer vs alwayes to prouide vs all our necelsities. They are true seruantes of God who haue already gayned heauen: but what shall we doe, who being children of the deuill, euery day heape sinnes vpon sinnes, considering withall that our sinnes are so enormous as deserue of God, rather punishment then pardon. Myne opinion therefore is, that it were very conuenient, sith God doth seeme to call vs by this Religious, that we make no longer delay, nor abuse the patience of his diuine maiesty, but that we repaire vnto him, and he will instruct vs in the direct way how to free our selues att length from hell, and euen to meritt mercy.

The other two theeues being of the same opinion, they went together with the Guardia to the holy Father, in whole preience being com they kneeled att his feete, laying: Father we haue litle hope; by reason of the enormity of our sinnes, that God will vse mercie vnto vs, but if you assure vs that we may yet finde grace, behold vs here ready to doe whatsoever you shall command vs. The holy Father receaued them verie amiably cherished and encouraged them, affirming withall that they should not doubt but God was very ready to pardon them, whensoever they should be resoluved to leaue their sinnes, and that they should rest assured therof, otherwise they should committ a greater sinne then any other that they had formerly committed: and therefore he promised and assured them God would pardon them all. These three theeues therefore being conuerted, did not only abandon their lewd life, but did perfectly renounce

renounce the world, and became Religious of his Order, where liuing piously, two of the a litle after passed from this life to a better. But the third liued many yeares after, wherein often considering the enormity of his sinnes past, he was so penitent for them that for fiteene yeares together he fasted three dayes euery weeke, with only bread and water, besides the lent and ordinary abstinences of the Order, and was neuer cloathed but with an old habitt without tunicle, he disciplined himselfe euery day, and after mattins slept no more, but continued still in prayer. In this time S. Francis departed to the glory which God had prepared him: and he suruiuing, perseuering, and continuynge in the asperity of life which he had begun, and in continuall and feruent prayers, had a reuelation from God of the paines of hell, and of the glory of Paradise, such as followeth:

A reuelation of the paines of hell and of the glory of Paradise presented after the death of S. Francis to one of the aforesaid theues, whome hauing no more cause to mention, and they being conuerted by the holy Father S. Francis, it seemeth not improper to put in the place of their conuersion, and to take it out of the ninth chapter of the tenth booke, disorderly there inserted.

THE LXXXVII. CHAPTER.

THis theefe conuerted by S. Francis, being according to his custome one night after matines in prayer, he found himselfe so oppressed with sleepe, that he could not ouercome it howsoever he strayned himselfe against it, so that he was enforced to fall into a deep sleepe, and was incontinentlie eleuated in spiritt by the Angel of God, that carryed him ouer an high mountaine all enuironned with grosse cutting stones, vpon which the Angell that carryed him lett him fall; from the toppe of the mountaine euen to the bottome of the vally, whers being vtterlie crushed, as he seemed and rather dead then aliue, the Angell called him and bid him arise: because he had yet a long iorney to make. The Religious answered him: how is it possible you should be so cruell as that, seeing in what plight I am, you would I should trauaile? The Angel then touching him cured all his greifes: then goeing before him, shewed him a field full of sharpe stones, thornes & wild thissels, which he commaded him to passe through bare foot as he was. The Religious knowing no excuse, passed through it, with such paine as may be imagined. After that he forced him to eter into a burning furnace which was at the end of the said feild: for hauing refused to enter in, he caused him to be throwne in with

with a forcke, by the deuils there present. Hauing remayned some time in that eternall fire, there enduring that, which he alone that hath proued it can expresse, the Angel drue him out, and bid him prepare himselfe to passe further: wherevpon he lamenting that without any pittie he would force him further, so burned and halfe dead as he was, the Angel touched him and cured his burning. Then he brought him vpon a bridge; that was in such sort made as he could not passe it without falling; for it was narrow and round, so that the feet could take no hold thereon. Vnder it there ran a very swifte flud full of fearefull and terrible dragons and serpentes: the Religious therefore excused himselfe, affirming that he could not passe it without falling: the Angell bid him follow him and not to feare, but in his going, to sett his feet where he should see him stepp before. So was he enforced to follow him euen to the middes of the bridge with a feare that freezed his brest: but the worst was, that being there, the Angel disappearing, left him, and ascended a mountaine, whereon was a very beautifull citty, leauing the poore Religious in such feare as each one may imagine: who beheld vnder the bridge those horrible dragons, that with open mouth attended his fall only to deuoure him instantly.

He being in such extremity, not knowing what else to doe, very fixedly embraced the bridge, and began to lament and inuocate the name of IESVS, whome he besought to haue pittie on him in that extreme necessity, and to deliuer him of that imminent perill. God hauing heard him, he seemed by litle and litle to haue winges grow out on his backe: wherevpon he began to hope, that his winges growing great he should fly vnto his guide. Now wanting patience to expect the full growth of his winges, such being his desire to be thence, he endeauoured to fly: but he fell againe on the bridge, and his winges also were loosed from his backe. Wherefore embracing the bridge againe, he began to lament and with the Prophet to say: Who shall giue me winges of a doue, that flying from so perillous and mortall estate, I may attaine a secure repoe? Onely thou my lord IESVS CHRIST, my sole hope and true redresse. He had scarcely ended these wordes, but his winges did grow againe: but he had no more power then before to expect the sufficient growth of his winges, by reason of his extreme feare, so that he fell and lost them againe. Then he prayed, and resolved to expect till his winges were fitt to carry him, though euery hower seemed to him a thousand yeares. So hauing attended till he knew them to be of sufficient strength and force, he mounted into the aire, and flew vp to the high mountaine where his guide was, where they both together went towards the gate of that supreme citty, wherinto the Porter admitting the Angell, made him stay without, asking him who he was, and who emboldened him

Psal. 54.

him to come there, He answered that he was a Frere Minor, and that his coming so farre was not of presumption or of his owne motion, but was conducted thither. The Porter replied. Attend till I call S. Francis to see if he know thee. In the meane while the Religious vewed the walles and structure of that admirable citty, that were so lustrious and resplendent, and with all transparent to behold all the iubilyes and exultations made by the Angels and blessed within, which to his exceeding contentement beholding, he saw the holy Father S. Francis comming and with him brother Bernard Quintaualle his first disciple and other Religious his companions, trayned with an infinite number of the blessed: who seeing him commanded the Porter to admitt him in which he did: and he was very amourosly receaued by the holy Father, who shewed him all the meruailes wherof neither the eye nor eare, nor vnderstanding of any mortall man is capable.

The Religious was so satisfied and content with this vew, and in his soule conceaued such consolation therof, that he no more remebred all his trauailes past, then if he had neuer endured them. S. Francis then said vnto him. My sonne admire no more: for it is necessary that thou retourne into the world: but greiue not, for God hath appointed thee a very short time of seauen dayes only, that in the meane time thou mayest prepare the better: which ended I my selfe will come to thee, and will conduct the thither to enioy with me this immortall glorie. The blessed Father S. Francis with a very rich mantell, and his holy stigmates glittered as shinning starres, with such a splendour, that he seemed with his beames to illuminate the greatest part of that great citty. The Religious did there know many SS. of S. Francis his company whome he had seene in the world, all whome he nominated att his retourne. Att length hauing receaued the benediction of S. Francis, he awakened out of his sleepe and heard the bell ringing to the Prime for it was yet early morning, and he seemed to haue spent many yeares in his iorney; he the recounted the vision to his Guardian and the Religious, for the consolation of all such aliue in labours and afflictions: and to demonstrate that whatsoeuer sinners they be, God doth neuer abandon any one, but doth euer asist and preserue them in all their tribulations, till he bring them to his kingdome. Now for confirmation of all the precedent, the Religious fell incontinently sick, and with an admirable seruour of spirit prepared himselfe for his last houre. The seauen dayes expired, the glorious Father S. Francis came as he had promised and carryed the soule of this theefe into Paradice. This holy Father then by this humility in this sort gayned soules vnto God, as by the ensuyng example shall more appeare.

How S. Francis converted certaine other theeuers: this was the 27. chapter of the 10. booke, transferrad hither as a place more proper vnto it.

THE LXXXVIII. CHAPTER.

THere were certaine theeuers that had their residence on an high mountaine, whence they disceded to robbe the passengers they found on the wayes, and some time very hungar contrayned them to aske bread for the loue of God att the Couent of the Freer Minors, neere the borough of S. Sepulcre: some of the Religious affirmed that it was not well done to giue them almose being theeuers and murderers, such as ought not to be releiued to the detriment of the common weale. Others neuertheles of compalsion gaue them almose, still admonishing them to leaue that lewd and detestable life, and to doe pennance for it. But S. Francis one day accidentallie comming to that Couent, the Religious proposed this doubt vnto him, to whome he answered: If you follow mine aduice, I hope by the grace of God, you shall gaine him those soules: which is, that you take bread and wine, of each of the best you haue, and carry it them to the mountaine whither they are retired, and that calling them, you very louingly vse this speeche vnto them: Brethren, feare not: for we are Religious that bring you to eat, then presentlie spread your cloakes on the ground, and lett them your bread vpon it, and with a ioyfull humility minister vnto them, till they haue done eating: After that in fauour of that charity on your part exhibited, and of what you may thenceforward doe them, pray and coniuere them not to hurt, kill, or offend any man personnally, and for that first time require no other thing of them. An other day according to the good answere they shall giue you, you shall carry them other bread, wine, egges and cheese, which you shall present vnto them with the greatest humility and kindenes that you can, then you shall say vnto them: Brethren we know wel what moueth you to liue in these mountaines, with so many inconueniēces, feares and perils both of body and soule, which you will vndoubtedly bring to ruine if you perseuer in this course. Therefore we counsaile you for the best, to giue ouer this life, to putt your confidence in God, and he wil neuer abandon you in your temporall necessities. On our part we will not faile for his loue and yours to releiue you, att least to saue your soules: and I hope in our Lord, said the holy Father, by this your charity and humility, you shall conuert them, which proued true. For these Religious following

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wing that counsaile, the vertue of the holy Ghost in a moment descended on the theeues in such sort that, moued by the demonstrations of those good Religious, they beleueed them, so that by litle and litle the greater part of them entred into the Order and there liued piously; and the rest hauing sworne vnto the Religious that they would amend themselves, spent their time in very great repose, and ended their liues as good Christians, to the exceeding contentment and edification of all the country, who for the same gaue thanckes to God and to those good Religious.

How much S. Francis shunned and abhorred honours for the loue of humility.

THE LXXXIX. CHAPTER.

THough by the precedent it may be sufficiently vnderstood how much S. Francis shunned worldly glory, and on the contrary how he reioyced when God was prayled by his workes: yet it will more manifestly appeare by this which we are to speake of him, on this occasion: Hauing one day ended his sermon in the city of Iterrena, the bishop arose, and after he had made a short exhortation to his people, in the end he said: That frō the time that God had planted the Church, he neuer abandoned it: but did alwayes illuminate and assit it by meane of some perfect men that continually supported the same, but now he did illustrate and maintayne it more then euer in this poore bare-foot and idiott, vterlie misprised for his loue: whereupon he concluded, that they were much obliged to giue thanckes vnto his diuine maiesty, for that his singuler benefitt. As soone as the bishop had ended, S. Francis doing him reuerence; very ioyfully full replied: doubtles, My Lord, neuer man in the world hath to this day so much honoured me as your selfe: for some say of me, this man is holy, and when God worcketh any thing by me, many reflecting on me only, giue not to God the glory due to his diuine maiesty: but you (as wise and prudent) haue separated the vile from the precious: wherefore falling on his knees before him, he kissed his handes and departed, leauing the bishop exceedingly edified.

If any one called him S. he would incōtinētly answere. If God should take frō me the treasure of his grace which he hath giuen me in custodie, there would remaine to me only my body and soule, both burdened with sinnes and extreme blindnes, as are the damned and infidels: but as the picture and sculpture, where the images of God and of the glorious

*S. Franc.
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*S. Franc.
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rious virgin are engrauen and painted in wood or stone, are reuerenced and honoured as figures of the true image, and as they are stone or wood no honour is attributed vnto them: euen so, a man that is the true image and portraiture of God, if he be honoured as such, he ought not to attribute that reuerence to himselfe, but to God whom he representeth: yea he ought to repute himself in regard of his sinnes most worthy of all infamy in this world.

*Why S.
Francis
once suf-
fered his
habitt
hands, &
feet to
be kissed.*

With the like spirit he one day receaued the honour which the people gaue him, who kissed his habitt, his handes and feet, without making them any kinde of resistance, his companion that saw the holy Father to stand still and admitt those honours, thought with himselfe that he was glad therof, and vainely conceaued pleasure therein, as afterward he told him: but the holy Father answered him. Brother, these people performe not the least part of what they ought to doe: Whereat his laud companion was more scandalized: S. Francis then added: Brother I attribute not to my selfe, but to God, all these honours which thou seest presented vnto me, whose althings are, and I remayne in my vile estate, which doth not conclude that the presenters gaine nothing thereby: because by that meane God is acknowledged and honoured in his creatures. The Religious by this answer was entierlie satisfied, with an exceeding admiration of his perfection: considering that when he reflected on himselfe, he could not on the other side in any sort endure prayles and honours.

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time he
shunned
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that
should
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giuen
him.*

Going one time to Rome, the Bishop of a citty (whose name is perished in the authors) by whose diocesse he was to passe, went against him out of the towne to entertayne him: which the S. in spirit foreseeing, he said to his companion: We may be here molested, for these men which you see, come to honour vs, which we cannot avoide, there being no meane to tourne out of the way: come therefore after me. He led him to a grosse heape of chaulke that was close by the way, whereof they made vessels, on which he mounted and did very nimbly tread thereon with his feet. Which the bishop and his followers beholding, they returned without giuing him a word. So the holy Father reiected the honour, and a while after he entred secretlie into the Citty, where he edified more by example of pious life then by wordes of doctrine.

Now by humility he discovered his owne imperfections, and what a capitall enemy he was to hypocrisie.

THE XC. CHAPTER.

TO the end that such as saw him labour vertuously, and performe holy and pious actes extraordinarily, might not imagine that what he did proceeded of any other then of God, that wrought in him, he publicquely discovered whatloeuere defectes he thought to be in himselfe, though most commonly they were no defectes at all. Being one day very sicke, he by obedience rebated some litle of his abstinence: but beginning a litle to amend, the true mispriser of himselfe taking courage against his flesh, for greater confusion, he said in himselfe: It is not requisite that the people repute me sobre and abstiner, and I on the contrary secretly eat flesh. And so, moued by the holy Ghost, he commanded some of his Religious, to fasten a rope about his necke and to lead him to the marckett place of the City of Assisium. But his Religious refusing to obey him, he putt of his habitt, and with nothing on him but that with was vnder it, he went into the place, called the Berlina, where, notwithstanding he had a quartane aigue, and therefore was very feeble, he began to preach, and when he saw that there was a great curse of people, he affirmed publikely that they ought not esteeme him otherwise spirituall, because in that his lent, wherein he had accustomed to fast in the honour of Allainctes; he had eaten flesh, for which he prayed them to reprehend him. All the assistants seeing so great a humilitie, conceaued a deep compunction in theselues, and sighing sayd: Ah we miserable wretches, that liue continually in sinne, and entierlie apply our selues to the commodities of this life, without doeing pennance, what will become of vs, sith this S. lamenteth to haue eaten flesh in time not prohibited, and vpon a iust and manifest necessitie? he doth neuertheless repent it, and with so much confusion accuseth himselfe, though he seeme neerer death then life: why learne we not of him, who leadeth a life rather to be admired then imitated, and who is a true pourtraiture of perfect humily, and as the imitatur of I E S V S C H R I S T, contemneth and treadeth vnder foot the world and the honour therof, reiecting the shadow of hypocrisy, wherein each one either more or lesse is intricated?

But all this was litle in comparison of what he did ordinarily for to mortifie the first motiues of the ambitions of the world and to batter them against the most firme rocke I E S V S

Bb3

CHRIST,

*S. Franc.
Went naked to the mar-
ket place
of Assise
to accuse
himselfe
of hauing
eatē flesh
in his
sicknes.*

*He would
not wear
a foxe
skinne
on his
stomake
without
being
seene.*

*He pub-
likely
accused
his euill
thoughts.*

*A legge
of a capō
changed
into a
fish in
the bāds
of a poore
man that
would
scanda-
lize S.
Francis.*

CHRIST, he did as followeth: As often as there assailed him any motion of pride or vaine glorie; being before the people, he confessed it to the world, saying sometime to his companion: I endeauour to liue in the presence of God in an hermitage and other solitary places, no otherwise then if I were in the middes of the worlde: for if I doe otherwise I am an hypocrite. Being onetime sicke in the winter, by meanes of an extreme coldnes in his stomake, his companion prayed him to haue a peice of fox skin sowed within his habitt against the flesh and vpon his stomake. But he would neuer content thereto without condition that there should be an other sowed without, that each one might know he woare a skinne on his flesh. Pasing by Alsifium, a poore old man asked him an almose for the loue of God: which name hearing vttered, he tooke off his cloake from his shoulders, & gaue him: Now in performing this act of charity, he conceaued a litle vaine glory, he confessed it publicly and acknowledged his fault. What cogitation God had of this his most humble seruant, may be iudged by the example following.

Saint Francis being in Alexandria, a citty of Italy, he was enter-tayned into the houle of a gentleman, who being very deuout vnto him, said: you must resolue to obey the gospel, and eat whatsoever shalbe presented vnto you, and thus laying, he caused a Capon to be brought: whereof the holy Father with the benediction of God did eat; meane while a poore man asked an almose att the dore, to whome the S. sent a legge of the capon: the poore man tooke it and with a malicious and diabolicall eye beheld it, and kept it quietly till the next morning, when S. Francis preaching, he shewed it publicly to the people, saying: Behold ye all, the flesh that this Frere Francis the preacher of abstinence doth eat; being last night full fed, he gaue me this legge of capon: But God, whose prouidence is admirable, and knoweth to dissolue the snares of the deuill, and to conuert them vnto his confusion, caused that when the poore man thought to shew to the people the said legge, he miraculously shewed a fish, wherefore being reputed fencelce, he was expelled the church whither he came after ward to aske pardon of God and the S. which being obtayned, the fish retourned into a capons legge, and the holy Father publicly recounted the successe of the fact: for which they generally gaue infinite thanks to God.

With

With what rigour he chastised his passionate wordes and thoughts.

THE LXXXI. CHAPTER.

HAuing bin many dayes blinde, as, by reason of the great infirmity of his eyes which his wepinges had procured him, it often happened; he determined for his consolation to visit Brother Bernard, one of his first companions and inward freindes, and to remayne some time with him, to talke of God. But comming to his cell on the toppe of the mountaine, and finding it shutt, he thought he was in prayer, as indeed he was, and hauing no meane to see him, he called him by these wordes: Open Bernard, and come comfort this poore blind mā, and many times reiterating the same, & the Religious not answering, he was much disquieted, and said to his companion: I haue called him many times, & he will not answere me, lett vs goe in the name of God: and so departing iudged Brother Bernard to be proud: and neuertheles considering better that it was not his coustume so to doe, he toured from his companion, and fell to prayer, where he was not long but he heard answere from God, who reprehending him, said: Little man, why doest thou trouble they selfe so much, doest thou thinck it reasonable to leaue the Creatour for the creature? when thou calledst Brother Bernard; he was with me, not with him selfe, and therfore he could not answere thee; for he did not heare thee. Which S. Francis hearing he humbled him selfe to God, and asked him pardon.

Then incontinently retourning directly to Brother Bernard, he mett him without his cell, hauing ended his prayer: and as Brother Bernard fell att his feet, he likewise fell at his; and acknowledged his fault of the ill iudgement he had conceaued of him: then required of him to enioyne him this pennance: I will, said he, that thou sett they feet on my throat, and on my mouth, and treading hard thereon shalt say: Poore worme, the sonne of Peter Bernardone, the-
re lye one the earth, sith thou hast so exalted thee in pride, base and abiect as thou art: which poore Brother Bernard hearing, he would in no sort yeld ther to, till the holy Father commanded him in vertue of obedience, and then with the greatest modesty and reuerence he could possibly, he obeyed, first conditioned that the S. should in like sort doe to him what he would; and so hauing obeyed the S. he reciprocally commanded him very sharply to reprehend him for euery fault of his he should know, as often as they should meete together. Thus did the Religious Saints of those dayes exercise themselues in humility. But S. Francis hearing that, was in such sort afflicted for hauing promised him obedience, for the great reuerence he had towards him,

*What
penance
S. Franc.
did for
an ill
thought
he had of
one of
his Bre-
thren.*

him, aswell for his great worthynes, as because he was the first of his Order, as that he reloued rather to forbear his sweet and gracious cō- uersation, then to haue subiect to reprehend him, though in such a ser- uant of God there were litle or nothing to reprehend.

*S. Franc.
did eat
pottage
with a
leaper
for pen-
nance in
that he
thought
he had
scandaliz-
ed him.*

A Religious that had care of a leaper, comming with him to our La- dy of Angels, the S. reprehended him for hauing brought him thither, with trouble and affliction, which he had scarcely vttered but, thinking that he had offended the leaper in reprehending the Religious in his pre- sence, he presently went and acknowledged his fault vnto his Vicair: of whome he demanded for pennance, that he would enieyne him to eat with the leaper in one same dish, who not to giue him discontent was constrained so to command him; and so there was incōtinently brought a dish of pottage from the kirchen, for the leaper and himselfe: it was admirable to see with what patience and tast this worthy seruant of God endeauoured to eat of the pottage in which the leaper putt his fin- ges, which being all couered with the loathsome infection of his lea- pry, the dropes of putrefaction ran into the dish; which caused in the Religious there present an extreame hart-greife and compasfion, that their Father without offence should performe so bitter and intollerable a penance. Lett this be spoaken to our confusion, that seeke so many curious arts to season our meates, which we desire to haue so delicious, The said Religious did assuredly affirme, that as often thence-forward as they remembered that refection of their Father with the leaper, all meat how delicate soeuer it might be, made their hart arise, and was disdayned of them.

Of the new and notable Matines of holy humility, which S. Francis and Bro- ther Leo did sing hauing no Breuiary to read them.

THE LXXXII. CHAPTER.

*S. Franc.
assured
of his
saluatio.*

THe holy Father being one time in the hermitage with Brother Leo, he went so farre from the celle, that the night preuented them, and hauing no Breuiary with them, the houre of Mari- nes being come, S. Francis laid to the Brother: will not yee that we employ this time vnprofitably? that therefore we passe it in the prayle of God, say as I shall tell you: but take heed that you chaunge not any word; I then will say: O Francis thou hast committed so many finnes in the world, that thou deseruest hell; and you shall answere me, you say the truth, that you deserue a place in the deepest part of hell. Bro- ther Leo, most humble and obedient, promised him to say so: but as the S. began to vtter the foresaid wordes, Brother Leo answered. Know Bro-

Brother Francis that you shal not goe to hel, but to the glory of Paradise. Which the holy Father admiring, he commanded him againe not to say so, but as now I shall tell thee: I will begin to say, Francis thou hast so much offended God, that thou well deseruest to be eternally accursed, and you shall answere, without any variation: thou art doubtles worthy to be foreuer expelled from the face of God: which the good Brother Leo promising to obserue, the holy Father with a loud and fearefull voice, knocking his brest, began: O God lord of heauen & earth, I haue committed so many offences against thy diuine Maiesty, that I am well assured, I meritt to be eternally banished thy glory and perpetually damned: and Brother Leo answered: God will accept thee for such an one, as among the great multitude of his elect thou shalt be especially blessed and glorious in his celestially kingdome. S. Francis more admiring then before, in that he knew how obedient Brother Leo was, he said: why doe you not answere me, as I enioyned you, and as you promised me? I now command you in vertue of obedience, that when I say: O wretched and miserable Francis doe thou thinck euer to deserue pardon of the God of mercies, hauing alwayes so much offended him? thou art not worthy of grace: I command you, I say, to answere me: thou in no sort deseruest the mercie of God. But albeit Brother Leo promised him, yet did he neuertheles answere him: God the Father whose mercy is infinite, and infinitely greater then our sinnes, will giue you his grace, accompanied with most singular giftes,

The holy Father therefore halfe angry, said vnto him: Brother Leo, why would you not giue me contentement in so reasonable a demande, and why haue we thus misprised the precept of obedience? Brother Leo falling prostrate on the earth, humbly answered him: God knoweth that I alwayes purposed to obey you, but he would haue me speake according to his will, and not according to yours. The S. herewith not fully satisfied, replied, and with instance said: I beseech you, my deere child, to comfort me at least for this once: and when you shall heare me to accuse my selfe, answere me that I am not worthy of mercy; Brother Leo answered him: Father, if it lye in me, for your satisfaction I will most willingly doe it: S. Francis then all bathed in teares, with a loud voice cryed out: Ingratefull wretch, doe thou thinck euer to finde pardon at Goddes handes; and Brother Leo incontinently answered: Father thou shalt finde it, and shalt besides obtaine so many speciall graces of God, that he will exalt thee on earth and in heaue (then he added) pardon me, Father, if my power hath not bin to speake otherwise, as you desired, for God speaketh by my mouth; thus did they spend the night, & in other like exercises, wherein God did apparently manifest how gratefull vnto him is humility, as also the true misprise of ones selfe.

How S. Francis prepared himselfe to prayer, and what conditions be that prayeth ought to haue.

THE LXXXIII. CHAPTER.

Sith we haue spoaken of the holy Fathers Marines, it seemeth now conuenient time, to make some mention of his so perfect prayer. Mine opiniõ is that there is no place more proper to speake thereof, then after the description of his great humility, whereon as on a firme stone, and true foundation, prayer, to haue it penetrate euen to heauen, ought to be builded. Wherefore he merited to obtaine all the conditions requisite to a true and worthy prayer; the first wherof, is the knowledge of ones owne misery, according to Salomon, when he of prayer saith: O liuing God, if any one acknowledging the wound of his hart to knowe witt, his finnes, doth list his handes to thee in this thy temple, heare him. ones own misery. Now who hath more perfectly knowne himselfe? who hath more clearly confessed his fault, and who hath more humbly discovered it to God and men, then this glorious S. Therefore also were his prayers admitted before the preface of God, who fixeth his eyes on the humble, and reiecteth not their pious prayers, as the Prophet saith. *Psal. 101.* The deuout Iudith, affirmeth the same, saying: *Iudith 9.* My God the prayers of the humble are alwayes pleasing vnto thee.

The 2. to keep the soule separated from terrestriall thinges, and eleuated vnto God. *Matt. 6.* The second condition of prayer, is to keepe the soule euer separated from terrestriall thinges, and eleuated vnto God, as saith Ilodorus: If the soule will be illuminated with spirituall light, she must prece-
dently purge her selfe of the filth of worldly cogitations, and so she may be neat and pure before her God. That prayer is pure, which is made without any mixture of worldly thoughtes, and that impure where the spirit is employed in terrestriall thinges. And therefore, IESVS CHRIST, leauing vs the forme of perfect prayer, saith: When thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber in secrett, that thou mayest leave out all care excepting only of speaking with God: shutt the dore of thy hart, that nothing enter in, to robbe his substance: call thy soule, and make her be in her selfe, without any distraction, and attentue in God, and then thy prayer shalbe perfect before God, and thou shalt be heard. The holy Father S. Francis performed the same, for he so reiected all other care of the world to transforme himselfe into God, that he had no remembrance of himselfe or of his worldly affaires. And therefore most commonly when he prayed, his body was eleuated into the aire, hauing nothing in it that could poise it downe to the earth.

The 3. condition is compassion. God teacheth vs the third condition of prayer, by his Prophet Isaie, saying,

saying. *Giue thy bread to the hungry, and thy coat to him that is naked* *Iſai. 21.*
and releue each one in his necessities: then offer thy prayers to God, and
 he will heare thee, call him by this meane, and he will come vnto thee.
 On the contrary, he that shutteth his eares to the demaund of the
 poore, when in his necessity, he shall crye to God, he will not heare
 him. This piety and compaſſion was ſuch and ſo great in S. Francis,
 that he abſolutely gaue or beſtowed, his only coate, occaſion preſen-
 ting, yea, which is the moſt that may be, he deſired to giue entierlie
 himſelfe, for the only loue of God, as is formerlie alleadged. In
 regard of this extreme charitie towardes the poore, and for
 his example vnto the world, he alſo merited to be ſo interiorly
 affected of his God.

The fourth condition of prayer neceſſary to a Chriſtian, is to giue good
 care to God, if we deſire to be heard of his diuine Maieſty. *for God Will* *The 4.*
abhorre the prayers of him, ſaith the Sage, *that hath not eares to heare his* *condition*
holy commandments: therefore the ſinner hath no cauſe to complaine that *is to har-*
 God doth not heare him, becauſe himſelfe did not firſt heare God: and *ken vnto*
 if he heare him in one only thing, or two, or three, he proueth deafe *God.*
 in all the reſt. And therefore, on the other ſide, one *Pater noſter,* or one *Prou. 28.*
Aue Maria, of a Chriſtian fearing God, is with greater reaſon heard, then
 a thouſand of a vicious and diſobedient perſon: the holy Father S. Fran-
 ciſc obeyd God in ſuch degree of perfection that hauing called him by
 his grace, he did not only labour to accompliſh his diuine preceptes,
 but euen the Counſailes of his goſpell, without omitting the leaſt
 point: therefore alſo did God afterward graciously graunt him what
 he demaunded, ſo farre forth as he permitted other creatures to
 obey him.

The fiſt condition is, that he that prayeth doe alſo ſeparate himſelfe *The 5. u*
 from the conuerſation of the world, not only when he would pray, *to be ſe-*
 but euen alwayes, if he will pray perfectly, and that he ſequeſter him *parated*
 ſelfe into ſome deſert and ſolitary place, if he will that his ſoule be *from*
 alwayes diſpoſed worthily to pray vnto God: The contemplatiue *worldly*
 Father S. Bernard, ſpeaking by experience ſaith: If the world *conuer-*
 delight thee, thou ſhalt euer be impure: Our Lord IESVS GHRIST *ſation*
 hath alſo left vs example hereof, for he often went vp to the *for euer.*
 mountaine, and left his beſt beloued diſciples, to vnite him- *S. Ber-*
 ſelfe alone to his Father; So this glorious Sainct found himſelfe *nard.*
 ſo much more gratified by the communication of the holy Ghoſt, *Matt. 26.*
 as he was farther eſtranged from the rumours of the world, *Iohn. 18.*
 and farther ſequeſtred into ſolitary places, wherin, he was ſo
 farre from being ſubdued by cogitations of the world, and by the in-
 fections therof, that he obtayned notable victories againſt the deuill.

The 6. is ardent charity. He shunned sensuall light, as distractiue vnto the hart, and hauing giuen some repose vnto his body in the beginning of the night, he spent the rest in most deepe silence, & in high contentment with his beloued God. The sixt condition of perfect prayer, is, a feruent charity towards God, without all feare, not like vnto that of the cold, negligent, and new beginners; for this perfect charity expelling all bale feare and labour, doth by loue vnite the hart of man with the goodnes of God. This loue was such in the holy Eather, that it continual-ly burned in his hart, as a liuing fire, the flame wherof dilated it selfe in charity, to the benefitt of his neighbour, through all the partes of the world.

Of the perseuerance of his prayer, and of the effect it wrought, and continued in S. Francis.

THE XCIV. CHAPTER.

The 7. condition of prayer, is perseuerance therein. Luc. 18. **T**He seauenth condition is perseuerance therin, because God saith we must alwayes pray, and not cease. Of this point it may be alleadged that the life of S. Francis was a continuall prayer vnto God, either for his owne saluation or his neighbours, desiring to communicate his Redeemer I E S V S C H R I S T vnto all Creatures, that they might know and loue him, as he did, and that for his owne part, he might ever dwell with his diuine Ma-iestie. But being, by the impediment of the weight of his terrestrial body that was a stranger and remote from his true country, disabled to enioy his beloued, he, by perseuerant prayer endeaoured with all possibilty, to keepe his soule alwayes vnited vnto him, which was not ouer-difficult vnto him, as hauing so mortified in himselfe earthly afflictions, that he conuersed in spirit on high with the blessed, as a Cittizen of heauen, and famelier in the house of God. Therefore prayer was vnto him a singuler refreshment in his labours, an assured fortresse against temptations, and a remedy in necessities: for distrusting himselfe, and his proper forces, industry, and knowledge, he had seled and reposed all his hope in God, by meane of prayer, which he affirmed that euery faithfull Christian ought about all other things to demaund of God in this life, considering that without it, one can make no profit nor progresse in spirituall life: and therefore, to be an example vnto his Religious, he made alwayes to appeare exteriorly and interiorly, that trauiailing or praying, being in action, or re-posing,

posing, his spiritt was continually attentiu vnto prayer. And therefore it seemed that he had not only dedicated his soule and body vnto his beloued God: but euen the very momentes of time, to the end that no visitation of the holy Ghost should by his negligence passe, and be lost, as not finding him disposed to receaue it. Therefore when in his iorney he felt the same, he would stay and lett his companion passe on, to know with a very deep attention, what God inspired vnto him. And when he was in solitary places, he filled the mountaines with sighes, and bathed the earth with a flud of teares, he beat his brest for the offences committed against his God. Sometimes he acculed himselfe as if he had bin before a Iudge, other times he demaunded mercy as a child, of his gracious Father: sometimes he sweetlie discoursed as if he had bin priuately with his intymous freind: he hath att such time bin heard of his Religious to inuocate the clementie of God, by the great commiseration which he felt in himselfe of the death and palsion of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, as if he had seene him crucified. He shewed exterior gesture conformable to the interiour effect. Sometimes he held his mouth against the earth, now he was on his knees, then vpright on his feet, now he held his armes crossed, then his handes ioyned towards heauen. And praying after this manner, he was most commonlie seene enuironed with a great light, and lifted into the aire in testimony of the interiour light and affection towards God, and then did he participate of the diuine secrettes, which he neuer reuealed, but when it was requisite: for he ordinarily said, that one did often loose an inestimable treasure, for a very bale price offending the giuer, & with daunger neuer to haue it againe. For which cause when he retourned from his exercises, he in such sort composed and dissembled his countenance, that he that had not much experienced it, would neuer haue suspected that he had prayed in such excesse of spirit. When he prayed with his Religious, he retayned his sighes and all other gestures: wherby he might be obserued. He taught the manner to pray secretlie, then to say: My God I recommend vnto thee this consolation which it hath pleased thee without any merit of mine to graunt me: to the end I steale not this great treasure. He assured them that by this meane they should obtaine that God inuiting them, would say: Freind because thou hast bin so humble ascend now vnto an higher place. LUC. 14.

Of the attention which S. Francis had in his prayers, and of the deuotion he had in diuine seruice.

THE LXXXV. CHAPTER.

The reason which S. Francis gaue of his attention.

With what purity S. Francis serued God.

How he once celebrated the natiuitie & with what new seruice.

HE said the canonick houres with so great reuerence and deuotion, that albeit he were most commonly weary and feeble by reason of his infirmities: yet making no esteeme thereof, he was alwayes standing or kneeling with his head bare, reading verie distinctly. If he trauailed when the time of prayer and saying the said houres was, he would stay. This practise did he neuer omitt whatsoever rayne or storme did happen, saying: If the body that is to be food for wormes, desired to eat in repose, with how much more reason ought one to giue repose to the soule, when she receaueth the refection of the life which she is eternally to possesse without corruption? He said his psalmes and what soeuer was to be said with such attention, as if God had bin before his eyes. When he was to name the name of God, he pronounced it so sweetly, that he seemed to lick his lippes, such contentment felt he in his soule: yea he commanded his Religious carefullie to gather vp all the papers they found wherein was written the name of IESVS: that it might not be trodded vnder foot. He reputed it a great offence, when one spake vnto God, to thincke of other matters. And if he chaunced sometimes to apply his spirit on other affaires, though spirituall, he would accuse himselfe thereof in confession; yea albeit he had his interior powers so recollected within him by meane of the continuall and assiduous exercise therein employed, that the flies of the world molested him very seldome.

Being one lentatt an hermitage he attempted for exercise to make an osier basket, but the time of prayer being come, because in saying the third houre, the basket came to his minde, he tooke it and incontinently threw it into the fire with these wordes: I sacrifice thee vnto God, in place of his seruice which thou hast interrupted.

This glorious Sainct, held the feast of the natiuitie of our Sauour in particuler deuotion. Being on a time neere vnto the city of Greccio, he determined to celebrate that feast after a new manner, therby to stirre vp the deuotion of the faithfull: & hauing therfore, to auoid scādal, obtayned permission of the Pope, he caused a great stable to be prepared in an old houell, where he caused to be putt hay and a manger, then brought thither an oxe and an asse, and assembled so many of his Religious, that they neere exceeded the inhabitantes of the place. But because he had publi-

published the solemnity, all the inhabitantes of the neighbour places flocked thither as who should be foremost, with flutes, cornettes, and other rusticall instrumentes, so that all the mountaines thereabout gaue ecchoe to their harmony, they ceased not all night to sound and reioyce before that stable, wherein S. Francis and a great number of his Religious prayed before three images of wood, that represented our lord IESVS CHRIST, the Virgin Mary and S. Ioseph, before which images were lightened a great quantity of lightes that were with curious art exquisitelie sett foorth. S. Francis read the ghospell at the midnight Masse, then preached to the people with such tendernes of hart, that when he would vtter the name of IESVS, he could not but called him the litle child of Bethleem. This feast was not spent without fruit for a famous gentleman named Iohn of Grecio, forsaking the cheualry and nobilitie of the world and the pompes therof, became verry famillier vnto S. Francis and an imitator of him, because he had seene him in vision that night with a child in his armes who seemed to sleep, and whome he sweetly awakened. The hay that was taken from that stable cured manie diseased beastes, yea verie manie men; whence may be iudged that God had singulerlie assisted that deuotion of his seruant.

How S. Francis caused the oratories of his Religious to be accommodated: and of the care he had of their enterteynement.

THE LXXXVI. CHAPTER.

THis holy Father laboured exceedingly to haue his Religious know the meane which they ought to vse to pray well, that being free from all worldly employments, they might apply themselves to prayer and contéplation, as a fountaine that drowneth disordinate thirstes, and on the contrary filleth and satisfieth the soule with a spirituall tast of diuine graces. And that the said Religious might more commodiously employe themselves therein, he would haue their Oratories sequestred from the bruit and tumult of the people, that they might auoyd distraction: and therefore he caused the to be made in the middes of woodes and forestes with bowes of trees and wreathed with rushes, where they spent their lentes entierlie in fastinges and prayers. And that the care of temporall affaires might not choake the grace of the spirit, nor the cogitations of worldlie necessities procure them impediment, he committed to one Brother alone, when the number of Religious permitted, the chardge of the dore, the kitchen, and larder, appointing all the other Religious to obserue the Order following.

All

All the morning they were to remayne retired in prayer in the diuine offices, and very strictly obseruing silence, till the Officer att the ordinary houre warned them to dinner, which he did by knocking on a tile: for their pouerty afforded not them a bell. But he knowing that man consisted of a body and soule, it was necessary the body should be mayntayned to sustaine the soule in the seruice of God: he accustomed to goe into the kitchen, where if he saw nothing to begin their refection, he would goe into the garden and thence bring a bundle of hearbes which he would mildly deliuer the Cooke, to haue drest for the Religious. When the Cooke had egges & cheefe gotten by begging, the holy Father in time conuenient would eat therof very merily, to encourage others, and would commend the prudence of the Cook. But if he exceeded, he would reprehend him for the excesse, and command him to giue nothing to the Religious the day following, which was performed: though most commonly they lett themselves att table to eat nothing but dry bread pourchaced by begging, which they did eat with exceeding contentment as a gift receaued of God, it hauing bin demanded for his sake: Because our Sauour worthely sayth: Man liueth not by bread only, but by the word and will of God. Therefore when they least thought thereon, and had most need thereof, they were provided for by the Angels, with whome in their continuall prayers they conuerled. After they had taken their refection they vsed deep silence and corporall exerciles, labouring about that which S. Francis commanded them for the necessities of the house. Then att the houre of Euen song & Compline, they all returned to accustomed prayer in their Church, and other places therevnto deputed.

Matt. 4.

Of the efficacie of the prayer of the Saint.

THE LXXXVII. CHAPTER.

OF the humilitie of hart of S. Francis, did grow a diffidence of his force and knowledge, a perfect confidence in the diuine pietie, which caused that he did neither desire nor beginne any thing, but he would first in prayer demand of God that he would please to inspire him to thincke and excute his will, wherbie he did obtaine singuler graces for himselfe and others. Att the beginning of his conuersion, being yet in the world, he obtayned that matters of difficultie (according to the world) as to serue leapers, and to pardon iniuries should appeare easy and pleasing vnto him, so that he had in short time obtayned by prayer that, which he could not haue attayned by tedious exercile. The Euangelicall perfection was reuealed vnto him; and

and what the Religious should doe in thise opening the Miffall: his rule was approued by Pope Innocent the third, he knew that the will of God was he should assift to the faving of foules. Our lord spake to him in the Crucifix, & in diuers other manners reuealing vnto him what he should doe: he subdued the assaults and embushes prepared against him by theartifice of the deuils, who fled when they could no longer resist him. It were not pofsible to recount by order all the graces which by prayer he obtayned of God: for beside the aforesaid, there remaine manie other to relate, of which we will here insert some few and the rest in place conuenient.

The bishop of Alsium becomming verie famelier vnto S. Francis, and often visting him att S. Marie of Angels, going one time vnto his celle, he found the dore thrust to, and in a manner shutt: therefore going neere and hearing no noyle, he thought he might be rauished in extalie in his prayer: which made him desire to see the manner thereof: and to that end verie curiouslie opened the dore so wide as he might thrust in his head, which putting further to see him, he was surprised with a great trembling, and such a feare, that he could not breath nor respire: and was miraculously throwne farre from the celle and lost his speech, wherewith he was so terrified, that he had scarce the force to retourne where the Religious were, to whome, hauing recouered his speech, he presentlie acknowledged his fault in his presumptuous enterprife. Thenceforward he much more reuerentlie respected saint Francis then before.

The Abbott of S. Iustin in the diocese of Perusia, meeting him one day, alighted off his mule for the great deuotion he had vnto him, and embraced him, discoursing a long time of certaine affaires: att their parting he besought the S. to pray for him, which he promised: and so being leparated, S. Francis withdrew himielfe from his companion saying that he must pay the dept which he would performe to the benefitt of the Abbott, who in the same instant that S. Francis prayed for him, felt himielfe as it were rapt out of himielfe by an extraordinarie seruour which ouer-past, he knew right well the vertue and efficacie of the prayer of the Saint, and afterward related the same to diuers.

Brother Macie an other time saw S. Francis pray in such fort that there seemed liuelie flames to issue out of his mouth and eyes, and so enterlie enflamed he went vnto him and calling him thise, he said: Ah! ah! Brother Macie come to me: wheratt he amazed att such an excessse of spiritt, cast himielfe into his armes, and S. Francis lifted him vp into the aire the hight of a launce: and afterward he recounted vnto the Religious that in that instant he felt such and so great sweetness, that he neuer after felt the like.

THE CHRONICLES

Passing by the Bourrough of S. Sepulchre, by reason of his infirmities riding on an asse, he was almost stifled by the extreme concourse of people that flocked thither to kisse his feet, coate; handes and his habit: whereat he remained so immouable that he seemed rather an image then a man. Being past the Bourrough, and not one of those people neere him, he demaunded of his companions, how farre he had yet to the Bourrough: whereby they knew that being raiſhed in spirit vnto heauen, he had not felt that extreme presse of people. The said Fathers affirmed that the same happened not vnto him once only, but diuers times, by reason of the great excelle of spirit which was ordinarily incident vnto him.

How by prayer he obtayned of God what he would.

THE XCVIII. CHAPTER.

THough God alone, who endued him with so many graces, is able to expresse them, yet we must not forbear to relate those that haue bin committed vnto vs by writting. Going to an hermitage there to spend one of his lentes, and being vnable, by reason of his great infirmities, to goe one foote, he borrowed an asse of a poore man, who of deuotion would also goe with him. The season being extreme hoat on the barren and sharpe mountaines, he had a great thirst, and such as he feared to dye therof: and being no longer able to endure it, he acquainted the S. therewith, who moued with compassion, alighted off his asse, and on his knees prostrated himselfe before God, and praying, did not arise till he was heard, then arising, he said to the poore man: Goe to yonder stone, and by the vertue of God, it will yeld thee water sufficientlie. He went thither, found water, and quenched his thirst: which done, the fountaine shutt againe, to make it more manifest that by the only merittes of the S. God had made the water to issue out of an hard rocke, as he did for Moyſes.

*S. Franc.
obtayned
of God
that a
conetow
man be-
came li-
berall.*

The holy Father being att Spoletum, a lay Brother called Brother Andrew of Sienna that went a begging, reported vnto him that there was a Bourgesse that had litle feare of God, of whome he could neuer gett an almofe: whereto he answered, that he should endeavour to gett were it but one onlie loafe of him, and should bring it vnto him. The said Religious went vnto him, and was so troublesome in demaunding, that att lenght by importunity he gott a loafe. Hauing it, he carryed the same to S. Francis, who deuided it into litle morcels, and thereof gaue to each of the Religious with condition, that they should all say a Pater and

an

an Aue for the auaricious, man: and himselfe ioyning with them to pray vnto God, they obtayned that this extreme nigard became liberall; God permitting him to know his fault, in such sort that thenceforward there was none more liberall vnto them then he.

A vertuous gentleman did often inuite the holy Father vnto his house, where he extended so much charity vnto him, that casting his affection on him, he much desired to haue him of his Order, and to that effect he prayed God that he would voutsafe to illuminate this his freind to leaue the world: which he did with such seruour, that being in extasie he was eleuated into the aire, whiles it chaunced that the said gentleman pasing by, saw him so in the aire, and God with him: who seemed to graunt him this grace, being therefore conuerted and touched by God, he entred into the Order.

A gentleman became Freer Minor by the prayers of S. Francis.

Pasing by the forrest of Cortone, a Lady of worth came before him and demaunded his benediction: which he hauing giuen her, she began to recount vnto him the miserable estate wherein she then was, to witt, that God hauing long time before inspired her to serue him, she had a husband so contrary to that her good intention, and such an enemy to their saluation, that therby she liued in perpetuall anguish. And therefore she prayed him for the loue of God to asist her. The holy Father answered her, woman haue faith in God, for he knowing your holy and pious intention, will accomplish your desire. Goe therefore to your house, and boldly vse these wordes vnto your husband: I tell you in the behalfe of God, that now is the time of mercie, and the time of iustice will come hereafter. And therefore, by the woundes of our redeemer IESVS CHR. crucified, I pray you so to dispose, that we may liue in the peace and feare of God, and you shall see, said S. Francis, that he will heare you: the woman left him and his companion in prayer, and she in the meane time went away full of consolation. The successe was admirable, for coming to her lodgeing, her husband asked her whence she came, she recounted vnto him all by order, and on the part of God vsed vnto him the wordes S. Francis had taught her, wherewith he became so mild, that he seemed not the man he accustomed to be; and in deed, answered his wife that he was resolued thenceforward to chaunge his life, and to serue God as she desired. Whereto, his wife replied: sith it pleateth you thus to obey God, it seemeth requisite that we beginne the same by a vow of chastity, it is a vertue exceeding gratefull vnto God, and wilbe very meritorious vnto vs, the husband was content therewith, and so they after liued

By the counsaile & prayer of S. Fr. a gentleman was conuerted from the world to God.

piously. This conuersion gaue a merueilous admiration to all those that knew them, and much more, when hauing persecuted piously together, they also dyed in one same day, the wife in the morning, and the husband att night, she as a morning sacrifice, and he as a sacrifice of the euenning: God permitting that according well on earth, they should, by the merittes of the prayer of his seruant, be also vnitd in heauen, leauing to the inhabitantes of that place, a perpetuall memory of so worthy a miracle.

Of certaine apparitions made vnto S. Francis in his contemplation.

THE XCIX. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis alwayes sought solitary places, wherein he might more freelie conuerle with God, and discourle with his Angels; and there making his celle of bowes of trees, distant from those of the other Religious, he enioyned Brother Leo his companion, to visitt him no more then once a day, and to bring him only bread and water, and once in the night att the houre of Matines; and att his comming, to say: *Domine Labia mea aperies*, and if he answered. *Et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam*, then he should enter to say matines with him: but if he answered not he should depart in peace: because, he was sometime so raiished in extasie, that he could not speake, day nor night. Brother Leo very seriously obserued the commandement of the holy Father, neuertheles he sometime watched him for his consolation: he oftentimes saw him eleuated into the aire, and then he boldly embraced his feet when they were low enough to doe it: for att such time he was lifted higher then a great tree, and att other times so high that the eye of man could not attaine the sight of him; which when Brother Leo saw, he would fall on his knees vnder him, and aske mercy of God.

This Religious recounted that he saw him once on his knees hauing his countenance fixed towardes heauen and his handes ioyned together, when he heard him vtter these wordes, which with great effusion of teares he often repeated: Who art thou, my God, and who am I? att which wordes he saw a light to descend on his head, and in the same heard a voice that spake vnto him: but he could not vnderstand the wordes, being remote from him for feare the Saint should perceauie him, and of reuerence, reputing himselfe, vnworthy to heare the diuine secrettes; he only saw S. Francis thrise to putt his hand into the said flame of fire, which done the vision disappeared. But Brother Leo could not goe so gently but the holy

Father

Father heard some noyse: and therefore sayd: I command thee in vertue of our Lord I E S V S C H R I S T, whosoever thou be, to stay there. Brother Leo staying said: Father, it is I. S. Francis, calling him, checked him for it: but Brother Leo acknowledging his fault, prayed him that sith he had pardonned him, he would also so much fauour him as to tell him what signified the vision which he had seene. The holy Father willing to satisfie him, in this manner expounded it vnto him: Know that when you saw that light descend from aboue, God communicated vnto me the knowledge of his diuine maiesty, and of my selfe, which was it that I demaunded of him, saying My God, who art thou, and who am I? that is, his greatnes, and worth, and my extreme balenes, and the very nothing that I am: and therefor I neuer accustomed to reiterate those wordes. After this reuelation, I said vnto him, whence is it then, my God, that thou voutfased so to gratifie a worrne of the earth, such as my selfe, so abiect and vile? and he answered me such high matters, as humane vnderstanding is not capable to conceaue them. Before he departed, he demaunded of me to offer him some thing, I answered, that I had nothing in this world, and that my selfe was his, that I had giuen my selfe to him for euer, and therefore knew not what to offer him. Then he commaunded me to putt my hand into his bosome, and to present vnto him that which I should founde there: which I did. And I found there three medalles or balles of gold, which I three seuerall times offered vnto him. Then he pleased to explicate vnto me that those three balles signified: precious pouerty, resplendent charity, and rich and golden obedience, which by his grace I acknowledged to haue in such sort offered vnto him, that my conscience doth not any way reprehend me in the obseruation of them; Now in counterchaunge of this gift which I presented, he of his infinite bounty graunted me that I should euer be thanckfull vnto him both in mouth and hart, for this and all other benefittes which his diuine maiesty hath bestowed on me: and which I reputed not mine but his. For this then was it that thou sawest me stretch out my hand three seuerall times. Now sith I haue satisfied thee I command thee that whiles I shall liue, thou discover it to no person of the world, and that thou watch me no more when I shalbe in prayer. Goe then, with the benediction of God, into your celle, and pray to God for me: for wish in few dayes, God will worck such meruaylous thinges in this mountaine, that all the world shall admire it. He meant the holy impression of his stigmates.

*S. Franc.
offered
to God
three medalles
signifying
the three
wordes.*

*S. Franc.
foretold
the im-
pression
of the
stigmates
he was
to haue.*

Of an other apparition vnto the holy Father.

THE C. CHAPTER.

A Very yong and simple Religious, being in an Oratory, where the Religious accustomed to retire themselues when they went into the desert, (S. Francis being then there) and being surpris'd by the night, he was to remaine there to take his rest, and then he determined to see that which he had so often heard spoaken of the holy Father S. Francis, to witt, that when he prayed in the night he did merueilous thinges. Wherefore euery one being gone to rest, he placed himselfe att the feet of the holy Father, and that he should not goe away without him, he tied their girdles together, to the end that if he arole he might be awakened. But this deuise litle auayled: for S. Francis arising very gently, loosed the cordes and went to pray otherwhere. The Religious that was a sleepe with his cogitation running on his desire, was not long from awaking, and finding himselfe alone and deceaued, purposed att aduentures to follow him through the woods: to whome God was so fauourable, that he found the holy Father in prayer on the toppe of a Mountaine; and he seeming to heare some speech, saw a merueilous splédour that enuironed the S. and therin, our lord IESVS CHRIST, with the glorious virgin his mother, S. Iohn the Euangelist; and an infinite nūber of Angels that were there present: which the Religious seeing, he was sealed with such a terroure that he fell as dead to the ground, and had no feeling till the holy Father hauing ended his prayer and retourning to his celle, by reason of the darcknes of the night stumbled against him. So conceauing presently who he was, embracing him and laying him on his necke the best he could and God assisting him, as a good Pastour he carryed his beloued sheep to the folde, and hauing reduced him to himselfe, & made him report what he had seene, he likewise commaunded him, not to reuale it to any liuing creature, during the time he was as in this world.

Of an other vision.

THE CI. CHAPTER.

Goeing one time from one Monastery to an other, there was committed vnto him for companion a yong Religious that had no great feare of God. So hauing refreshed tnēselues in the Monastery, whither they went, the S. repayred to his rest before the others, that

that he might rise to prayer, when the rest were in their first sleepe, as he accustomed to doe, and his said companion remayned with the other Religious, to whome murmuring against the S. he said, that he did eat, drinke, and sleepe very well, and withall that he was reputed a S. and therefore he resolved to goe see, if he arose in the night to pray as the said Religious had assured him he did, and to that end, he slept not that night. Att the second watch he perceaued the holy Father to arise, who hastened into a wood thereby, whither the Religious followed his steppes very gently. Being come to the place that seemed most proper, and falling on his knees, he beganne to cast out his ordinary fervent sighes and pious enflamed speeches, beseeching the glorious virgin to shew him her sweet child, in such sort as she brought him into the world. This prayer ended, the said religious saw the holy virgin mother, appeare in a most resplendent light, who comming to the Saint with an admirable benignity deliuered and laid her sonne in his armes, whome the S. hauing thanckfully receaued, he tenderly embraced, clipped, and kissed verie amourosly; this infinite contentment and contemplation of the S. continued euen to the breake of day, when he rendered him againe whence he receaued him, then with most humble reuerence kneeling on the ground, all the vision disappeared. The said Religious was so edified by this miracle, that he craued pardon of the S. and chaunged his life. This holy Father had such and the like visitations of the glorious virgin Mary, of the blessed Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul and of the glorious Archangell S. Michael, for the particular deuotion he had vnto them; and they all did exceedingly comfort him; as his Confessor and companion Brother Leo, did diuers times heare and see.

A Religious doubting of the purity of life of S. Francis was sufficiently assured thereof hauing watched him one night.

How the priuiledges which God gaue to the Frere Minors, were by an Angell, declared to their Father S. Francis. This is extracted out of the 26. chapter of the 10. booke, and here sett in his proper place.

THE CII. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis being in the Couent of Sainct Vrbin, the Angel of *Seauen* God appeared vnto him, who reuealed vnto him the singuler priuiledges and graces which God had graunted to them that *ges* which obserued his rule, and should die in his Order. The first priuiledge is, *God* that if their intention be good, they shall in althinges be gouerned *granted* by the holie Ghost. The second, that in this desert of their pilgrimage, *to the* they shalbe particularly defended in their temptations from the snares *Order of* of their enemies and frō the pitt of mortall sinnes. The third that they *the Freer* shalbe so purged here, that the paines of Purgatory shalbe no stoppe *Minors.*

to

to their speedy passadge to the glory which God hath prepared them. The fourth, that they who shall follow their rule with fidelity and feruour, shall meritt to heare and obtaine that which was promised to the Apostles of God, and afterward enioyed by them, when he said: yee that haue left althinges to serue me, shall sitt on seates, and shall iudge others. The fift, that God shall giue them increase of the goodes of this life and of grace, who shall haue particuler deuotion to the Order and to the Religious therof in releuing them, and shall afterwards if they perseuer, make them heires of his glorie. The sixt is that they on the contrary, who shall persecute the Order, and not repent, their life shalbe short, or if they liue, it shalbe in afflictions and maledictions of God, and after their death shalbe damned. The seauenth, that this rule shall endure euen to the end of the world, and that temporall prouision shall neuer faile the Professors therof, that likewise therein shalbe alwayes Religious of good and pious life, and zealous of the honour of God and Religion.

Matt. 19.

Of the continuall exercises which S. Francis vsed of the passion of Iesus Christ.

THE III. CHAPTER.

THe principall of all the exercises of deuotion wherin S. Francis ordinarily employed his soule, was the passion of our lord IESVS CHRIST, which was so engrauen interiourlie within his hart, euen from the beginning of his conuersion, that as often as he remembered the same, he could not forbear to weep, and therefore he so loued the blessed crosse, that if it might be euer truelie said, that any one hath faithfullie carryed it after God, he hath bin one, and doubtlesse the same, in shunning all temporall consolations, seeking and finding all kinde of affliction in this world, to suffer with IESVS CHRIST. He was also, by meanes of his continual prayers, abstinences, watchings, and pilgrimages, become very diseased and infirme: for he was subiect to the head-ache, greife of the eyes, and of the lunges: notwithstanding he omitted not the pious workes that caused those infirmities. He had no care to be cured therof, excepting his eyes for the benefitt of his neighbour, that he might suffer in his infirmities with his God: such was the interiour and perfect loue, which he bare to his most holy passion for which, euery thing that to vs seemeth carnallie bitter, was to him spirituallie exceeding pleasant.

Being one day transported by this dolour of the passion of his sweet IESVS CHRIST, not suspecting to be heard, he cryed out with a loud voice

voice, as if he had then seen him die: wherevpon a man of honour that feared God, who had bin famillier vnto him in the world, passed by where the holy Father was, of whome he very instantly and as vtterly amazed, demaunded what disgrace had befallen him, S. Francis with teares answered him: I lament and weep for the greivous tormentes and dishonours wherwith the barbarous Iewes afflicted my lord I E-
SVS CHRIST, which I so bitterly bewayle in regard that all the world, for whome he hath so much endured, seemeth to haue forgotten so worthy a benefitt. Which vttering, he began to poore out a riuer of teares, in such sort that the gentleman who came thither to comfort him, began himselfe to bewayle the pafsion of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, with his seruant Francis.

*The great
compass-
sion which
S. Francis
had of
the pas-
sion of
our Lord
Iesus
Christ.*

Being one time blinde (which often happened vnto him, and sometimes euery moneth) through the infirmity of his eyes, a Superiour of his Order demaunded of him, what would follow, sith he could not read at least some spirituall booke, by meane wherof he might reioyce his spirit in his infirmity. S. Francis answered him: Brother, I alwayes finde so much consolation and so much loue in the memory of the life and pafsion of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST, that if I should liue till the end of the world, I should need no other lesson. So that this holy Father carried the gospell better written in his hart, then is seene on paper. Wherefore he often put his Religious in minde of those wordes of Dauid: *My soule hath reioiced consolation, I haue bin mindefull of God, and haue reioiced:* as if he said, that he respected no other temporal consolation, sith he enioyed all consolation in the pafsion of his sweet IESVS CHRIST. And therefore he exhorted his Religious often to tourne the leaues, both night and day, of this pious booke of the pafsion of IESVS CHRIST, without care of any other. And all his sermons and exhortations were (accordinge to the abundance of his hart) of this crosse and most sacred pafsion, to perfect them therein, as a most assured way of saluation.

Psal. 76.

An exhortation of the holy Father S. Francis, to the meditation of the pafsion of our Redeemer Iesus Christ.

THE CIV. CHAPTER.

BE alwayes mindefull, said the holy Father, of the way of humilitie and pouerty of the crosse, wherby our Sauour IESVS CHRIST hath walked for our example, considering that if it were necessary for his diuine Maiesty to enter into his glory, by meane of this his pafsion, it is farre more necessary for vs detestable

Luc. 24.

ble sinner to tread the same path. And if euerie faithfull Christian be obliged therevnto, much more are we, we I say, who make profession to follow the crosse: which God will that we doe not onlie beare, but that by our example and doctrine, we procure others to beare it, and doe induce them after vs, with them to follow him that is our guide: Considering withall that the good wil to imitate the passion of our Sauour, is a particuler grace which the holy Ghost bestoweth on the soule, that truelie loueth and serueth him, for the soule that is selfe-affected and a freind to her selfe doth not taste, but repugneth this doctrine of the holy Ghost, nor reputeth this participation of the passion of our Lord, necessary to perfection: yet pretending to make greater benefit by other wayes, not wayes, but hidden downe falles, shunning the gall of tribulations, and the bitternes of the crosse of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, she holdeth her hart drowned and blinded in selfe affection, by other naturall and voluntary cogitations, resting assured that she serueth God better in that liberty of life, without respect of the infinite pleasures and contentmentes, which the soule receaueth interiously in this contemplation and compassion of her God: because they can finde no tast but in suffering for him: but the soule purged and entierly exempted from her proper interestes, permitteth her selfe to be guided by the holy Ghost, that he worck in her, att his good pleasure, as an excellent master of the singuler doctrine which our Lord left written in the bookes of his humility, patience, and passion, the infallible wayes of Christian perfection. Therefore the soule that obtayneth of him greatest purity, seeketh also to transforme herselfe in to his dolours, reputed all other wayes as mortall food, and this alone for a medicine, bitter vnto the tast, but right pleasant in fruit, bitter to tast, delicious in operation. So preferring health before the tast, she experienceth how admirable this tast of eternall life is, to haue reiected the former that is fraile, transitory and mortall. For she experienceth that his loue doth not better appeare in any other, then in his charitable passion, and that the more she transformeth her selfe into IESVS CHRIST crucified, the more she is transformed into the high and glorious God, becaule the humanity cannot be separated from the diuinitie, and himselfe requireth it as a grace of his Father when he saith:

Iohn. 17. I will that mine be where I am And so the soule contemplateth both the one and the other estate of her God, that she may neuer be separated from him, as she should be, in shunning his passion, according to the wordes of S. Paul: That he who suffereth not with him, shall not raigne with him: she therefore considereth him mortall & immortal, of which estates the one is of them that run the race, the other of them that haue already gotten the price. Now as the price is not gi-

uen

men but to them that run, so heauen is not giuen but to them that cary the crosse. Neither is it reasenable that the seruant be aboute the Lord, or the disciple aboute the master: therefore we see that God communiceth his grace to them that follow him in the foresaid māner, and on the cōtrary he taketh it from those presumptuous who affirme that they will adhere vnto him, by other inuentions, and neuertheles doe neuer leaue themselves, and in the end also they are seene erroneously to fall.

How the holy Father knew the Will of God to be, that men should exercise themselves in the passion of Iesus Christ.

THE CV. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father did not without cause affirme the foresaid, considering that desiring no other thing then IESVS CHRIST crucified, with S. Paul, and teaching no other vnto his Religious the better to secure them and himselfe, he demaunded of God that he would voutsafe to reueale vnto him, in what exercise he and his might appeare most acceptable vnto his diuine maiesty: and being inspired of God, arising from his prayer, before the high altar where he was, he tooke the missal that lay thereon, wherevpon making the signe of the crosse, he began againe to pray vnto God, that he would please by the opening of that Missal, to manifest vnto him wherein he was best serued. Then opening it, he found the passion of our Redeemer, and not trusting the first time; att the second he found the like, and the third time the same: Being therupon fully encouraged, he prepared himselfe to suffer, and as presaging what should arriue vnto him, he gaue thanckes vnto God that he would please to make him participant of his passion: so that being no longer able to conceale the alacrity of his hart, as drunken with the spirit of diuine loue, he shewed it exteriourlie, singing prayes vnto God in the Italian tongue, and in French, and often times with two stickes, whereof he held the one in forme of a violl on his breast, and the other he vsed for a fiddle stick. But he neuer ended his songes, till he was vtterly melted into teares, with such an excessiue dolour, that what he held, fell out of his handes through his extreme feeblenes, without any feeling of his; washing his soule with the teares of his corporall eyes, which he made blinde, to illuminate his soule interiourly. And though he had attained to such degree of perfection and sanctity, he answered his Phisitian, who told him he would destroy his eyes if he did not abstaine frō such weeping, that he would rather loose the eyes which he had cōmon with flies, than the teares, by meane wherof he illuminated the eyes of his spirit, and

made themlike vnto those of Angels, in the contemplation of God. Notwithstanding which torrent of teares, he alwayes shewed a gracious face as one that by reason of the puritie of his conscience, feared nothing, and was euer vnited with God. He also ioyfully receaued whatsoever came from his holy hand. But in regard that one could not arrive to this perfection without hauing precedentlie washed his soule from the spottes of sinnes and imperfections, he ordinarily perswaded his Religious to endeauour to purge themselves with teares poured out for the palsion of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST.

How the hole Father S. Francis seeing any creature afflicted could not forbear to weepe, considering therein his God, in his dolourous passion.

THE CVI. CHAPTER.

BY this charity of compalsion which he perfectly carryed to IESVS CHRIST, his soule remayned so affected to suffer all aduersities with his neighbour as a member of IESVS CHRIST, that he was as much greiued as if himselfe had endured, and this purity so augmented that he could not endure any creature to be afflicted, though they were vnreasonable, and among them, those particularly, to whome the holy scripture compareth our Lord IESVS CHRIST: and therefore he loued little Lambes, in whome is figured the patience & meeknes of our God. Comming from Ancona to Osimo with brother Paul, whome he had made Prouinciall of the *Marches*, he mett vpon the way a sheepeheard: that among many goates and kiddes, had one only sheepe, which beholding, he felt his heart throughpeared with greife, to see the said sheepe alone among so many goates and kiddes, reprobate creatures: he therefore said to his companion: Behold, brother, how meeke that sheepe is among those goates: our Lord walked so humble and meeke among the Scribes and Pharisees, in memory whereof I pray you lett vs endeauour to redeeme it out of this sheepeherds handes. But his companion not knowing what remedy to apply, in regard they had no mony, he began with the holy Father to bewaile his greife; they both thus weeping, by chaunce there arrived a merchaunt, who hauing demanded the true cause of their weeping; and vnderstanding the same, payed the sheepeard for the said sheepe and gaue it to the holy Father, who full of comfort, conducted it to Osimo, euen to the presence of the Bishop, who admiring therat, and demanding the cause after he vnderstood it, was much amazed at the great goodnes and admirable simplicity of the holy Father, & began also

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also to weep. Now the day following, that the sheep might not be worse entreated, he left it with the Religious women of Seuerina, which was much to their contentment, for the deuotion which they boare to the S. And therefore keeping it as a peculier relique, in short time it yelded so much wool as they made therof an habit, which was sent him in their name to the chapter following: which he receaued with such affection, as cannot be expressed: for embracing it very louingly, he called all them that were there, to reioyce with him, att the profit he had made of that sheep.

On an other time he mett in the same Prouince of *Marches*, a contry man that carryed on his shoulders two lambes to sell att the Marckett, & comming neere the holy Father, he laid downe his Lambes, a litle to repose himselfe, the two lambes, then that were bound together began to blear, & the poore holy Father to cōpassionate them, wherfore turning to the cōtry fellow he asked him why he held them bound in such extreme affliction and torment, and he answered; because they should not escape, he being to carry them to the markt where necessity enforced him to sell them, and that he could doe no lesse, the S. replied: and what wil they who buy them doe with them? the fellow answered. O simple man, they will kill them, then cause them to be baked, boiled, or roasted according to their appetite, and so eat them. S. Francis, exceedingly afflicted, said to himselfe: it shall not be so, for I will haue them my selfe: and withall went to the fellow, and said: come hither, wilt thou giue me thy lambes for this my cloake? wherwith he was very well content. So hauing made exchange, the holy Father bethought himselfe how he might doe to saue them; wherof hauing cōsulted with his companion, they found it most expedient to render them to the cōtry fellow, which they did vpon his promise that he should neither sell nor kill them.

S. Francis gaue his cloake to saue the life of the two lambes.

Being in the monastery of Verecondo neere Agubio, a poore sheep brought forth her yong one nere vnto a fow; which did eat the tender lambe, which S. Francis did bitterly lament with these wordes: Ah little lambe, how wel doest thou represent the innocent death of my Sauour IESVS CHRIST: then as zealous of the honour of almighty God, he laid his malediction on the said fow, which att the very instant did admirably fall diseased, and within three dayes died: and by force of this maledictiō, became of so loathsome saueur that she was cast into a ditch, where neither dogge, nor foule, nor other beast would eat her, but she dried vp, and so remayned for memory long time after. This example should teach vs, by the temporall punishment of this beast, that whosoever vseth crueltie towards his neighbour, cannot auoyd the eternall iudgement of God: as also how iust the compassion of this

Psal. 21. S. was, sith it merited to be heard of God, who being, by his Prophet David, called worme, and not a man; the holy Father tooke vp the very wormes he found on the wayes, that passengers might not tread on the with their feet. In the winter he gaue either wine or hunny to the flies to preferue their liues, and so by meane of all creatures, he eleuated his hart to God the Creatour, in whome he liued with full consolation.

An exposition of the glorious Father S. Francis, made on the Pater noster.

THE CVII. CHAPTER.

THe *Pater noster*, was the principall of all the prayers which the holy Father most contentedly vsed, wherein he conceaued a meruaylous tast, eleuating his hart vnto God. And therefore he taught his Religious, for edification of their neighbour to say it in this manner: *Our Father*, most blessed and most holie, our Creatour and Consolatur, *which art in heauen*, amongst the Angels and SS. whome with thy presence thou doest illuminate, thy selfe being the light; thou doest enflame them with loue, thou being loue it selfe, rayling them to thy glorie: thou dwellest in them, because thou art the soueraigne eternall good, whence all good is deriued, and without which nothing is good in it selfe; *Hallowed be thy name*, and lett thy knowledg be manifested vnto vs: that we may the better knowe the greatnes of thy benefittes, and the accomplishment of thy promises, the eminency of thy Maiestie, and the depth of thy iudgements; *Thy kingdome come*, to the end thou now raigne in vs, by grace, and that hereafter we, attaine the other of glorie, where is eternallie thy glorious presence, with perfect loue, glorious companie, and ioy and alacritie without end; *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen*, that we may loue thee with an infinite loue, and may be alwayes in cogitation with thee, that we be with thee in intencion, and with thee in spirit, seeking thine honour in all our actions, with all the forces and powers of our soule, and bodie, freele employing all in the seruice of thy loue, and in no other thing, and that, to obserue thy commandement, we loue our neighbour as our selues, shewing to all as to our selues an entier charitie, for thy loue, reioycing at the good of others, as at our owne, compassionating their necessities and afflictions as our owne, giuing them all assistance we can possible, far from offending them, as our selues would desire to be assisted in like necessity: *Giue vs this day our daily bread*: that is, thy deeply beloued and blessed Sonne, our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, in our spirit

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spirit and vnderstanding, with all reuerence, by the great loue wherewith he hath affected, and by what soeuer he hath said, done, and endured, for vs wretches; *And forgie vs our debtes*, by thine infinite mercy, by the vertue of the passion of thine only Sonne our lord IESVS CHRIST, and by the merittes and prayers of the blessed virgin Mary, pardon vs also good God, *As we forgie our debtors*: and if we pardon not them perfectly as we ought, make vs, Lord, to doe it, that we may meritt pardon. Graunt, good God, that by thy loue, we doe not only forbear to doe euill for euill, nor hate our ennemies, but that we loue them, and that by good offices and prayers for them we demonstrate the same to thee, O God of mercie. Lord God forsake vs not in our cruell temptations, both secrett and manifest, and permit vs not to fall therin, *but deliuer vs from euill*, past, by meane of true contrition, and holy pennance; present, by preferuation of thy grace; and future, by perseuerance in thy most holy feare. Amen.

Of certaine other mysticall prayers and canticles, which the holy Frther S. Francis made.

THE CXVIII. CHAPTER.

The Holy Father in his canonicallyl houres said in latin these prayers following, which he composed in the prayse of God.

HOly, holy, holy, lord God almightie, which art, which hast bin, and art to come, thou art worthy that we offer vnto thee, and to receaue of vs, all prayse and honour, and that we exalt and acknowledge thee aboue althinges, the lambe that was slaine is worthy to receaue all vertue, diuinitie, wisdome, force, glorie, honour and benediction. Lett vs alwayes prayse God, lett vs yeld the honour dew vnto the Father, the Sonne, and the the holie Ghost: lett vs praise God for euer: lett vs prayse the lord of heauen, and earth, and of all other thinges created vnder and on the earth, with those that are in heauen: lett vs prayse God and exalt him for euer. Glorie be to the Father, and to the Sonne, and to the holie Ghost. Lett vs prayse God for euer and magnifie him as he hath bin, is now, and shall be world without end. Amen. Lett vs prayse God and exalt him for euer, Amen.

An other breife prayer vnto God.

Almighty most high and my soueraigne good, all good that onlie is good. We giue thee all praise, all praise, all glorie, all honour, and yeld thee all the thanckes we can, and will that all good be referred to thee alone, Amen.

An other short prayer, for the diuine office

Most high most mighty, most iust, and most mercifull lord, afford vs miserable wretches so much of thy grace, that we may accomplish thy holy will, and may with all diligence seeke that alone which pleaseth thee: that being interiously illuminated and enflamed with the fire of the holy Ghost, we may tread the most holy steppes of thine only Sonne our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, that by meane of this thy grace we may see thee with the blessed, thou that art the most high God, who liuest in perfect Trinity, simplicity, and vnity, and as almighty reignest in eternall glory. Amen.

A prayer to the Queene of heauen and to the Angels.

God saue thee, holy Queene, most holy Mary, mother of God, and perpetuall virgin, cholen of God the Father, and of the holy Ghost the comforter; in whome is faith and the entier perfection of all eminent vertue with all good vnited, sith thou hast merited to haue in thee the author of life and grace. God saue thee diuine Pallace: God saue thee the habitation and tabernacle of the Redeemer: God saue thee, thee robe of God: God saue thee, the seruant and mother of God: and God saue thee, with all the Angelicall powers, considering that thou art sent by the holy Ghost into the hartes of rebelles, that of Infidelles thou make faithfull and true seruantes of God. O most worthy mother of our Sauiour IESVS CHRIST, Espouse of the holy Ghost, pray for vs with S. Michael the Archangell, and all the celestially spirittes, vnto they beloued Sonne our lord and master. Amen.

An other prayer to the virgin.

Holy Mary virgin and lady, like vnto whome neuer woman was borne, nor shalbe, in the world, daughter and seruant of the most high king and celestially Father, most sacred mother of IESVS CHRIST, and Espouse of the holy Ghost, pray for vs, with all the Angels and sainctes, vnto they beloued Sonne, that he will voutsafe to saue vs: Glory be to the Father, vnto the Sonne, and to the blessed holy Ghost, Amen.

Praises vnto God.

Lord God, thou art holy and God of all Goddes, that workest merueillous thinges, that art the mighty and most high, thou art the omnipotent Father, and entierly soueraigne lord of heauen and earth, God in Trinity and Vnity and sempiternall, soueraigne good, all good, and euery good thing. Lord God liuing and true, thou art true loue and perfect charity, thou art wisdom, humility and patience, thou art the incomprehensible beauty, thou art true pleasure and assured repose, thou art our hope and ioy, thou art iustice, temperance, fortitude and prudence of mortall men: thou art the riches that can satiate vs: thou art meeke,

mecke, thou art our only protectour and our guard, thou art our vertue, faith hope and charity, and the sweetnes and consolation of all; thou art the bounty without end, a great God and admirable, God omnipotent, pittifull, merciful and our Sauour. Glory be to the Father and to the Sonne &c. The holy Father saint Francis had a very feruent deuotiō to this versicle *Gloria Patri*, therefore he often repeated it in his prayers. He respected not so much, *Sicut erat*. Saying euen song one day with Brother Leo, att euery versle of *Magnificat*, he said, *Gloria Patri*, feeling therin a merueillous tast and contentment, yea such as he thought he should neuer be satisfied with saying thereof: he taught a Religious Preist, that was in affliction and extremely tempted, to say, *Gloria Patri*, which he did, and was incontinently deliuered of his temptation.

*S. Franc.
deuout to
the versicle
Gloria Pat.*

Of the Canticle of the sunne and other creatures, composed by S. Francis.

THE CIX. CHAPTER.

THis holy Father composed a Canticle in latin, in the prayse of God, when he reuealed vnto him the fruition of the glory of Paradise, and because the sunne, of all corporall creatures is the cheife of the irreasonable, and our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST is called the Sunne of iustice, he therefore intituled it the Canticle of the sunne, which is that which followeth, diuided into eight litle verses, conformable to the eight beatitudes. Most high lord, all prayles, glory, and honours are thine, to thee alone ought to be rendred and referred all graces; and no man is worthy to name thee. My God be thou praysed and exalted of all creatures, and particularly of our brother the Sunne thy worcke, which illuminateth the day that lighteneth vs, it is also thy figure, by his beauty and splendour; likewise of the siluer moone and glittering starrs which thou hast created in heauen so bright and so beautifull. My God be praysed by the fire, whereby the night is lightened in his darcknes, because it is resplendent, pleasant, subtil, cleare, beautifull and vigorous. Lett the aire and windes, cleare and cloudy seasons and all other seasons, prayse my God, wherby all other base creatures doe liue. Lett my God be prayled by the water, an element most necessary and profitable to mortall creatures, humble, chaste, and cleare. Lett my God be prayled by the earth our mother, which supporteth and nourisheth vs, producing such diuersity of herbes, flowers, and fruites.

S. Francis added the ensuing versicle, When he accorded the Bishop, and the Capitaine of Assisium, as in place proper shalbe inserted.

Let my God be prayled by them that pardon each for his loue, and support in pacience, afflictions and infirmities, with alacritie of spirit. Blessed are they that liue in peace, for they shall be crowned in heauen.

The holy Father likewise added the verse ensuing, When God, had revealed vnto him the day of his death.

Let my God be prayled by corporall death, which no liuing man can escape. Wretched be they that dy in mortall sinne, and blessed those that att the houre of their death be found in thy grace, as hauing obeyd thy most sacred will: for they shall not see the second death of eternall torments. Lett all creatures prayse and giue thanckes to my God, lett them be gratefull vnto him, and serue him with due humility. This Canticke was many times sung by the said S. vnto his Brethren, whome he also taught to sing the same. He exceedingly reioyced when he saw them sing it with grace and seruour: for hearing it he merueillouslie eleuated his spirit vnto God. He sent certaine of his Religious that were very spirituall, vnto Brother Pacificus, who liuing in the world had bin a very skilfull Musitian, as we haue said, that he might learne them to sing it perfectly in Musicke, therby to praise God afterward, when they should preach ouer the world: for he would they should obserue to sing this canticke after their preaching, as a prayse vnto God, and that they should affirme themselues to the people, to be the musitians of God, and that they would no other rewarde for this their musicke, but that they should doe pennance for their sinnes. For confirmation whereof, what are the seruantes of God, said he, but his representers to moue and awaken humane hartes to true spirituall ioy? and particulerlie the Freer Minors, who are giuen to the people for their saluation. The holy Father affirmed, that in the morning att Sunne rising, a man ought to prayse God the Creatour of the Sunne, by whose beames our eyes are illuminated by day: and that he ought likewise to prayse God in the night for his Brother the Fire, because by it our eyes are lightened by night: and that we should be all blinde, if God did not illuminate our eyes by these two creatures: for which and for the other creatures whole vs we ordinarily haue, we ought continually to prayse our glorious Creatour.

Br. Pacificus a Musicia.

*Of the prayer and thanckes giuing to God which S. Francis made after
the confirmation of his rule.*

THE CX. CHAPTER.

MOst mighty, most high, most holy, and soueraigne God holy Father and iust Lord, king of heauen and earth, we thanck thee for the loue of thy selfe, because that by thy will, and by thy only Sonne with the holy Ghost, thou hast created all thinges corporall and incorporall: then diddest frame vs according to thine image, and placed vs in the terrestriall Paradise, whence through our fault we are fallen. We also thanke thee for that, as thou hast created vs for thy Sonne, so for the infinite loue which thou diddest beare vnto vs thou hast procured him to be borne in this world, true God and true man, of the wombe of the euerglorious virgin Mary, and wouldest that his life should be vnto vs an example of pouerty, humility, and penitence: and that his precious blood, his tormentes, and most cruell death, should be the price of the Redemption of humane nature. Finally we thanke thee for that thy Sonne is once againe to come downe on earth, in glory and maiesty, to chase the accursed into hell, who would not repent nor acknowledge thee for Redeemer; and to say to them that shall haue serued and adored him, and done pennance: Come ye blessed of my Father, possesse the kingdome, which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world. But because we miserable sinners are not worthy so much as to name thee, we humblie beseech thee to accept, that our Sauour IESVS CHRIST thine only beloued Sonne, with the holy Ghost the true comforter, doe yield vnto thee for each of vs the thanckes we owe thee, according to thy pleasure, and that he satisfy thee for all the graces thou giuest vs by his meane and shalt giue vs, provided that we faile not in our endeaour, such and so great as no humane tongue shalbe able to expresse. We also pray the blessed Virgin, S. Michael, S. Gabriel, S. Raphael, and all the quiers of blessed Spirittes, Seraphins, Cherubins, Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, Pouers, Vertues, Archangels, and Angels, the blessed Elias and Noe, and all the Patriarckes and Prophetes, S. Iohn Baptist, and all the holy Innocentes, S. Peter, and S. Paul, withall the other Apostles and Euangelistes, Disciples, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, and all the saintes that haue bin, are, and shalbe, that with the good pleasure of thy diuine Maiesty, they giue thee thanckes

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for

for so many fauours as it hath pleased thee to afford vs, to thee that art soueraine, true, eternall and liuing, and to thy most glorious Sonne, our Lord I E S V S C H R I S T, and to the holy Ghost the comforter, world without end. Amen. *Alleluia.* We Frere Minors vnprofitable seruantes, demaund of thee and most humbly beseech thy diuine Maiestie, to graunt vnto all them that will serue thee in thy holic Catholicke, Apostolique & Romane church, and to all Orders of the said holy Church, Preistes, Deacons, Subdeacons, Acolites, Exorcistes, Lectors, Porters, and to all the Cleargie, to all Religious of both sex, and to al Kinges, Princes, Lords, and seruants, Artizans, and labouers, to all Virgines, widowes and maryed women, and to all lay men and women, healthy and diseased, children, yong and old: to all people, families, & tongues, to all nations; and all the men of the whole earth, that are, and shalbe, the grace of true pennance in this life and so perseverance in the true faith, without which no man can be saued; and we beseech thee to graunt vs grace together with the, to loue thee withall our hart, withal our spirit, with all our forces, withall our vnderstanding, and withall our affections, desires and interiour willes, sith thou alone hast giuen vs, soule, body, and life, creating and redeeming vs by thine only mercie: thou hast saued vs, and hast giuen vs miserable, rotten and putrified, ingratefull and ignorant, lewed and rebellious wretches, & dayly doest giue vs infinite benefittes. Permitt then, good God, that we neuer desire nor seeke other thinge, and that no other thing seeme good vnto vs, or delight vs, but they Ielfe our Creatour, Sauour and Redeemer, only true God; that art the perfect good, all true and soueraine good, that only is good and pitifull, meeke and delightfull, that only is holy, iust, true, and vpright: of whome, for whome, and in whome, consisteth all our pardon, all the grace and glory of all penitentes, of all the iust, and of all the blessed that raigne in heauen. Permitt, also Lord, that nothing preuaile and hinder vs, but that in euery place, in all time, at all houres, & continually we loue thee, in verity, and humility, and that we hold thee imprinted in our hart, as our true God, And graunt, if thou please, that we loue thee, honour, adore, serue, prayse, glorie, and preach thee for great and glorious, and that we thank thee, thou that art most high and God, three and one, Farher, Sonne, and holy Ghost, Creatour of althinges, and Sauour of all them that beleue in thee, and haue placed in thee their only hope and loue, who art without beginning and without end immutable, inuisible, inenarrable, ineffable, incomprehensible, inscrutable, blessed, prayed, glorious, glorified, high, amiable, agreable, delectable, and aboue all thinges desirable world without end. Amen.

Of the intelligence, and spirit of prophetic which this S. had.

THE CXI. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis had in such sort cleared his soule, illuminated and vnited it to our soueraine God, by the continuall exercise of prayer, that albeit he had no ouer-great vnderstanding of holy scripture, being neuertheless illuminated by the beames of diuine reuelation, he did penetrate the sublimity of the said scripture, with an admirable intelligence of the diuine mysteries, by which, acquired science remaineth excluded, the infused of diuine loue entering in his place. And therefore, what he read in holy scripture, he vnderstood by diuine reuelation, as a dilligent disciple of the holy Ghost: he first imprinted it in his memory, and then ruminated the same with an interiour tast of deuotion: And (if God inspired him not) he neuer reuealed it to any person to appeare a learned master, as now the practise is.

*S. Franc.
had a
science
infused
fro hea-
uen that
made him
admirable to the
most
learned
diuines.*

The Cardinall of Hostia, Protectour of the Order, who was afterward Pope Gregory the ninth, secretlie requested him one time, for the consolation of his soule to expound vnto him certaine profound places of holy scripture: I doe not, said he, demaund this theologicall exposition of you, as of a great doctour, for I know well you haue not studied: But I require it, as of a man illuminated of the holy Ghost. The S. satisfied him, and gaue him such contentment as he could desire no more.

Being one day att Sienna, a Religious diuine asked him, how the Prophett Ezechiel is to be vnderstood where he saith: *If thou doe not admonish the impious of his impiety, an account of his eternall death shalbe exacted of thee:* the holy Father answered: if those wordes be to be vnderstood generally as they sound, I thus vnderstand them, that the seruant of God ought in such sort to burne and giue light by exemplare life, and by his pious conuersation, that he seeme silently to reprehend all the impious: for by such in deed, he preacheth their vices. Wherein is duely to be considered, how much more a Religious is obliged herevnto by the light of his good life, seeing that it is here apparent that if he doe it not, he cannot escape the terrible iudgement of the liuing God: which prudent and true interpretation, the diuine affirmed to proceed directlie from heauen, and that himselfe could not giue a more direct exposition then was giuen by him, with the swift & speedy winges of the eagle soaring from infused science. And affirmed with all that our interpretation was not such, which proceeding

Ezech. 33.

from our blinded vnderstanding, goeth naturally, as a serpent trayling his body on the earth. The said Religious did not try the holie Father in this matter onlie, but in diuers others also, in all which, he rested fully satisfied, and exceedingly admiring att the grace which God had giuen him, which was so great, that he could not only discouer and vnderstand mysteries past, but (which God alone of himselfe can doe) he discovered euē the thinges to come, as if he had had them then before his very eyes, as by this example and them that follow, shall euidentlie appeare.

*Prophe-
sies of S.
Francis.*

*Of the
saluation
of his
freind.*

*The apo-
stasie of a
Religious*

*Of the
losse of a
battell.*

The holie Father being yet in the cittie of Sienna, he once demaunded a charitie for the loue of God of an affectionate freind of his, who directlie answered him he would not graunt it, but that he should first tell him the certainty of his predestinatiō: a demaund doubtles verie straūge, yea exceeding terrible. But God that would, for his profit, manifest vnto the world the merits of this his so glorious seruāt, was cōtent he should promise to assure him: Being the amazed att this so inciuill request, he eleuated and addressed his countenance to heauē, but much more his spirit, and so remayned in prayer a certaine space, wherein was reuealed vnto him that this man was of the nōber of the predestinate, and then he promised his deuout freind eternall life, assuring him of his saluatiō. But this good man vnable to conceale this his so extreme spirituall alacritie, and so cōming to the eares of the afore said Religious diuine, he was exceedingly scādalized att the presūption of the holie Father. Therefore repaying vnto him, filled with choller as another Pharise, he demaunded if it were true, the S. answearing affirmatiuelie; he laughing and deriding him, said: and who hath reuealed vnto you that this your freind should be saued? to whome the S. verie ielous of the honour of God, openly answered: he that also told me that the last night thou committedst such a secrett sinne, and that therefore, in short time thou shalt abandon thy habitt. But because the Religious deserued not pardon, though by manifestation of his sinne he might be well assured of the ensuying punishment which he prophesied vnto him, he neuertheles did not penance as the holie Father then admonished him, God permitting him to die out of his Order, that by his damnation, he might manifest the saluation of the other.

Whiles he was in the cap of the Christians vnder Damiette, when he wēt to preach to the great Soldā, he prophesied to the Christians that if they gaue battell they would loose the feild. But they not beleeuing him, their fault of incredulity was payed by the losse of the bodie of the army that was putt to flight, whereof one part was slaine. Retourning afterward on this side the sea, and arriuing att Celano, he was invited to dinner by a gentleman, where being, as according to his custome he prayed before his sitting to the table, he saw in his God, on whome he had al-

wayes

wayes his eyes eleuated, that which he fore told, as it afterward arriued, for incontinentlie calling vnto him the said gentleman. Confesse and prepare your selfe, said he, for in short time you shall dye, and from this time you shall receaue the recompence of all the good worckes you haue done, particulerlie in harbouring the seruantes of God. Doe then in such sort as without impediment you may goe directlie to God. The gentleman therefore who had confidence in the wordes of the holie Father, sodenlie taking leaue of him prepared himselfe to confelson, then calling the companion of saint Francis who was preist, he made an entiere confelson vnto him: afterwarde he recommended his patrimonie to the diuine prouidence, so to auoyd all impediment. And so with the greatest deuotion he could possible he expected when God would call and inuite him: but he expected not long, for whiles his familie were att table, without other greife, but very well disposed of body and spirit, he rendred his soule to his Creatour, according to the prophesie of the holy Father, armed by the diuine mercie, with armour conuenient and necessarie to a true penitent.

*Of the
sodaine
death of
his freind*

How S. Francis saw the secrets of mennes consciences.

THE CXII. CHAPTER

OVr lord IESVS CHRIST hauing chosen the glorious Father S. Francis for Pastour of his flock, he also so illuminated him interiourlie by his diuine vertue, that he discovered vnto him the secrettes of the consciences of those that were his, and likewise their priuate and hidden necessities: so that by the same meane he knew both the grace which they had receaued of God, and euē that which they the receaued. By this knowledge he foretold the fall of manie, who seemed to haue attayned the state of perfection, and on the contrarie the saluatiō of manie wicked, prophesying their conuersion. He saw what should succeed them for manie yeares after, as if it had bin present, onlie beholding the vnspotted and cleare mirour of diuine light, and his admirable splendour, by a diuine prerogatiue and especially the succesles and mutatiōs of Religion, which he would sometimes with abōdānce of teares cōmunicate to his cōpanions. Touching that which concerned the consciences of his Religious, he both with al possible speed and effect redressed the same: and if they were far distant, he appeared vnto them in their sleepe, and instructed them what they ought to doe, and frō what to abstaine, as by the sequell shall appeare.

*S. Franc.
knew the
thoughts
of men.*

The holie Father, conuining from beyond the sea, with his companion Brother Leonard, a Religious of very worthie familie, and being by reason of his infirmities verie wearie and feeble, he had for ceraine dayes

*Of a Religious
that murmured
because
going a
foot S.
Francis
had an
asse.*

dayes the vse of an asse. But the poore Brother Leonard that followed him a foote, being also very weary, began to murmure, saying to himselfe: what doe I poore fellow that I am, to follow this man a foot? Is there not great difference betweene his discent and mine? why then contrary to that which should be, doe I goe on foot and he on horseback? and euen I follow him as a lackye driuing this asse, with speed, and so wearying my selfe as I can no longer endure. The good Brother Leonard went on thus still discourfing with himselfe in his first motions, when as the holy Father S. Francis seeing in spiritt the secret murmure of his companion called him, and alighting from his asse, he said: Brother and Freind, I confesse I haue litle discretion, to see you so wearily to goe a foot, and my selfe to ride att mine ease: Gett vp therefore on this asse, now att least whiles I remember me, considering that being in the world, you were farre more noble and more honorablen then my selfe. Brother Leonard hearing this was vtterly confounded and amazed, that the S. so soone knew his euill cogitation: Falling therefore at his feet, and confessing his vaine and ridiculous discourse, with a very deep contrition, he asked and obtayned pardon.

Two very spirituell Religious came expressly from Rieta to the Oratory of Grecio, to visit S. Francis and to haue his benediction. But being there arriued, it was told them that there was no hope of speaking with the holy Father, by reason that hauing taken his refection he was retourned to his cell, where he prayed and slept, and came forth but once a day to eat, it being lent and that being then so solitary, he would not haue his companiō, much lesse any other Religious to disturbe him, vnles he so commaunded. These two poore Religious exceedingly afflicted, esteeming themselues by reason of their sinnes vnworthy of such grace, not hauing oportunity any longer to expect, because their superiour had commaunded them to retourne the same night to their Couent, they hastened homeward. S. Francis who in spiritt had seen all this, contrary to his custome came hastily out of his celle, and went after the said Religious, who by that time were farre gone, and so in an instant giuing them consolation together with his benediction which they demanded, he dismissed them doubly satisfied, knowing that the holy Father came by diuine inspiration to giue them his benediction.

*Of two
Religious
that came
to visit
him.*

*Of a Religious
that by
humility
would
conceale*

Two Religious comming from Naples to visit him, the elder of them on the way committed some fault, att which the yonger was extremely scandalized: now comming to the presence of S. Francis, he giuing them his benediction, demanded of the yonger, how his companion had behaued himselfe: he esteeming it indecent to discouer the faultes of his Brother, answered, well. The holy Father replied, My son-

sonne, beware that vnder colour of humility, you doe nor lye; for I the fault know what hath passed in your iorney: and I would haue you know which his that you shall shortly see this man to proue worse: Which so succeeded, for this old man not long after went out of the Order, according to that which S. Francis had foretold for the sinne, for the scandal, and for his neglect of doing pennance, which is the ladder to diuine mercie. *companie had committed.*

In the first beginning when none was admitted and receaued into the Order, but by S. Francis himselfe, a gentleman of Luca, came expressly to demand the habitt of him, he had with him some of his companions, it being when he lay sicke in the Bishoppes lodging of Alsium. The said gentleman being conducted to the S. he fell on his knees before him, most instantlie beleeching him to admitt him into his Religion, but the holy Father beholding him attentiuely, answered: O miserable man, this request is not graunted to men entierly addicted to sensuality and to the world, as you are, for you doe lye to the holy Ghost: these teares are feigned and not true; your interieur is not with God: neither is it he that calleth you to this Religion. Depart you therefore in good time, for you are not fit for it. The holy Father had scarce ended these wordes, but the Religious vnderstood that the kinred of this gentleman were come for him: but not beleeuing them, he put his head out att the windoe, whence hauing seene them, he was very ioyfull, and taking leaue of the said Religious he retourned with them to his house. Those present exceedingly admired the spirit of S. Francis, that knew the feined intentions of this man who exteriourly appeared so contrite. *Of a gentleman that feined to desire the habitt of F. Minor.*

The rest of this chapter is transferred to the end of this first book, with the 31. and 32. chapter of the second booke, there placed together as their proper place.

Of a Religious that seemed a S. The 28. chapter of the 12. booke, transferred to this place as proper vnto it.

THE CXIII. CHAPTER.

HE knew by an other Religious, who being deluded by the deuill he more strictly to keepe silence proceeded so farre, as that he would not so much as confesse as did the other Religious but by signes as one dumme: which he vsed also when he demanded any thing,

thing, and without any speech he shewed such signes of spirituall a-lacritie, that he moued all the Religious to prayse God: The same hereof was presentlie diuulged, so that he was generally held for a S. In the meane while S. Francis arriuing where this Religious was, he was aduertised of his proceeding; but he answered that he was exceedingly tempted and deluded by the deuill, because confession of the mouth was necessary, as contrition of the soule, and satisfaction of worckes. The superiour of the place then confirmed the sanctity of the said Religious, vnto S. Francis, alleadging that it was not possible he should be tempted of the deuill, considering the signes of sanctity which he exteriourlie shewed. The holy Father replied, proue him in this manner: commaund him to confesse twice or att least once euery weeke, which if he refuse, beleue that it is a delusion of the deuill. Which the superiour hauing done, the Religious putting his finger in his mouth, and shaking his head, by these signes declared, that he could not doe it, for breaking of silence. His superiour would no farther vrge him: but the great prudence of S. Francis was not long vnknowne: for a litle after this Religious S. abandoned his Religion, a tooke a secular habitt. Two Religious of his companions meeting him attyred secularly, conceauing great compasison of his blindenes, sayd vnto him: O miserable wretch and forgetfull of thy selfe, where is that thy solitarie and saint-like life, yea such, as thou wouldest not conuerse with thy Brethren, nor speake in Confession, for keeping of silence? thou now hauing lost thy selfe in the world, abandoned our habitt, reiected thy vow, and broaken the rule, as if thou haddest no beleefe of God? but he gaue them so diuellish an answere, that he plainly discovered, he had not only chaunged habitt but also Religion, and interiour vertue. These good Religious could by no meanes reduce him, though they laboured to reprint in his minde the obligation he had to God, and the perill of his damnation: and so in few dayes after he dyed, being in possession of the deuill that held him choaked: because he would not confesse. It is a worthy example for all Religious, to beware of singularity, in matters appertayning to their Order, that demonstrate more pride then spiritt of deuotion and humility.

*One must
beware
of singu-
larity.*

Of other merueillous accidents wherein the spirit of Prophetie of S. Francis did miracously appeare.

THE CXIV. CHAPTER.

THe Cardinall of Hostia hauing on a time commaund S. Francis to repaire vnto him to Rieta, where then was Pope Honorious with his Court: and comming neere the city he saw a great troupe of people that came against him: wherfore stopping his iorney, he staid in a Church, before S. Fabian, a league and halfe from the city, where was a very poore Preist, that very courteously and in the best manner he could, enterdayned him: But the Cardinals and many other of his Court, knowing whither he was retired, went thither to see him: by this visitation; the vineyard of the poore Preist was wastfullie gathered by the indiscretion of the trampling traine of the Cardinals and others, whereat he exceedingly complayned, repenting that he had enterdayned S. Francis, in regard that for the litle good he had done him, he thought he should incurre such losse. The holy Father, *S. Franc.* who in spiritt knew the affliction of the Preist, that durst not *obtaind* acquaint him therewithall, and who on the other side knew what *of God* fruit he was to procure in that place, whither he had bin expres- *that a* ly sent of God, there to plant an abundant vigne of true peniten- *litle vigne* tes: in which respect he could not depart thence, reputing it be- *ne boare* houfull to endure the losse of that litle materiall vigne; for the *ten times* better gayning a spirituall. Neuertheles as a pittifull louing Father, *double of* he called the Preist, whome, for his consolation, he bad not to *that he* vex himselfe nor to feare, for of the litle that remayned of his *vsed, and* vigne he should gather double the ordinary, though there appea- *Why.* red almost nothing. The Preist that firmly beleued these wordes, deserued also to be recompenced according to his faith: for wheras he accustomed to haue three hogsheddes, he had then twenty, of verie good wine, as the holy Father had promised him: which (with exceeding ioy and admiration) he related vnto him and to all the people thereabout, to the prayse of God, and of his seru-
uant Francis.

This holy Father being in the Prouince of Massa, on the Mount Casal, within a desert Church there employed in prayer, God reuealed vnto him that in the same Church were reliques of his saintes. Wherefore determining that they should no longer there remaine concealed, and without the honour due vnto them, and hauing no opportunity of

*Revela-
tions made
to S. Fr.*

longer abode in the said church, by reason of other occurrences for which he was to take order; he commaunded his Religious, sheuing them where they were, to take them from that place, and to carry them into their church: which hauing said, he departed. But these good Religious forgatt it: Wherefore they being one day to say masse in the Oratory, thinking to prepare the Altare, they found vnder it certaine bright and glittering bones, that filled the place with a most delicious sauour. Being extremely amazed, and diuising who should putt them there, they remembred the commaundement which S. Francis had giuen them, and concluded that those were the reliques which he commaunded them to remoue: and that because they had sayled therein, God had miraculously supplied it: as accordinglie S. Francis, being returned to that place, and hauing vnderstood the processe and pardoned the Religious their negligence who most humbly required the same, thanked God very hartily for that he voutsaied to haue care of the very dust of his true seruantes, then he went to see and

*Predictio
of S. Fr.
concer-
ning two
Religious
giuing
them the
habitt.*

with great contentment to reuerence them. Brother Pellegrino and Brother Falcone, comming to take the habitt at the hands of S. Francis, he prophesied vnto them, that the first, though verie learned, should serue the Religious as a lay Brother: and the other, albeit ignorant, should applie himselfe to contemplation, wherein he should proue most perfect, as the other reciprocally in humility: which came to passe, as in the sixth booke, and 55. chapter, shall appeare.

Other effectes of the propheticall spirit of S. Francis.

THE CXV. CHAPTER.

*Prophē-
sies of S.
Francis.*

Sainst Francis remayning in the house of the bishop of Rieta, exceedingly afflicted with the greife of his eyes, a Preist called Gedeon aduanced by the said bishop, a man worldlie affected, had long time kept his bed sicke, without power to remoue himselfe, and when any endeauoured to take hold of him or lift him vp, he remayned vtterly crooked, for he could in no manner stand vpright. So perceauing that no humane application auayled, and that Sainst Francis rightlie to the purpose was there, he caused himselfe to be brought before him: at whole feet falling, he besought him to make the signe of the crosse vpon him: The holie Father answered: My Brother and friend, know that because to this day thou hast liued carnallie, and according to the allurementes of thy sensuall appetites, without any respect of the iudgementes

mentes of God, he hath therefore sent this affliction to make thee know and amend thy selfe. But now in his holy name I giue thee his benediction: and doe aduertise thee, that if thou alter not thy course of life, a greater miserie will befall thee, for the sinne of ingratitude. So hauing made on him the signe of the crosse, the Preist incontinentlie arose very found, and stretching himselfe on his feet, the chinebone, and the brest plate gaue a cracke as a staffe forcible broken. But by reason that this ingrattfull fellow and ennemy of his saluation, retourned vnto his vomitt, being one day with diuers of his companions, committing their ordinarie sinnes, about midnight the rooffe of the house fell vpon him, and so being crushed and slaine alone, that the diuine vengeance might the more euidentlie appeare, according to the prophesie of S. Francis, he miserablie ended his life.

To a
Preist
curing
him by
the signe
of the
crosse.

Being att his Oratory in Grecio, it was told him, that the violent stormes did euery yeare destroy all the frutes of that place, that the wolues deuoured the cartell, and that the very inhabitantes could hardly be secure of their liues. The holy Father therefore hauing compasison of these poore people, he made them a sermon, whereby he exhorted them all to amendement of life, as the surest meane to appeale the wrath of God: to confesse and communicate, with a firme purpose to offend no more: affirming that by this meane God would disburden them of the said punishment: which being effected, he admonished them to beware of sinning a fressh, for then the chastisement would be redoubled. This people moued by these holy demonstrations, prepared themselves with great contrition, confessed, communicated, did penance for their sinnes and craued mercy of God: in respect wherof and in fauour of the prayers of the holy Father, God incontinentlie freed and deliuered them from the tempest and wolues, yea in short time this people did not only repaire their dommagés past: but became very rich. But alas! they could not long time perseuer in this happy estate, which made them forget the behoufull admonitions of S. Francis: which procuring Godes wrath, he so chastised them with the rodde of pestilence, that few among them remayned aliue: he also burned a great number of their houses, accomplishing all that S. Francis had foretold vnto them.

To a
country
man.

As this holy Father preached in Apulia, a Religious that was fallen from his Order, repayred vnto him, fell att his feet, and with infinite teares demaunded him pardon: promising if he would restore him the habitt, to correct his course of life. The Saint made him arise, and before he spake a word, shewed him a gibbet that was vpon the high way, then said vnto him: I

To a Re-
ligious
fallen frō
his order.

receau thee, but remember that if thou once againe proue an Apostata from the Order, thou shalt be hanged on that gibbett. Which euen so succeeded: for falling againe, and being shortly after in cōpany with certaine lewd fellowes, he was apprehended and hanged on the same gibbett, cōfirming the vsuall prouerbe: a wicked life hath a wicked death.

Of the peace which was made betweene the Bishop and the Gouvernour of Afsisium, by meane of two Religious sent by S. Francis to sing in their presence the canticle of the sunne.

THE CXVI. CHAPTER.

THe mortall enmities which were betweene the Bishop and the Gouvernour of Afsisium redoubled the greifes of S. Francis his infirmitie who lay sicke att our lady of Angels. The Bishop had excommunicated the Gouvernour, and he had forbidden all persons to sell any thing to the bishop, or to buy ought of him. So their enmities was euerie day nourished and encreated by some new and diabolical inuention, to the great scandall of all the cittie and the ruine of their owne soules. S. Francis seeing that neither ecclesiasticall nor secular persō laboured to accord them, laid one day to his Religious: doubtles this may be a great shame to vs that make profelssion to be such seruantes of God, to permitt this so dangerous and abhominable hatred thus to breed, without applying any redresse. Wherevpon calling two of them, he said: Goe presentlie to the Gouvernour, and in my name bid him to repaire to the Bishoppes house together with the principall of the cittie, and as manie as he can traine thither; and two others he commanded, to goe in the meane while vnto the Bishop, and when the Gouvernour and people were come to the Bishoppe, to sing the Canticke of the Sunne; with the verse which he then added, (as is before métiōned) in the prayse of God, att which song (said he) I hope those hartes so obdurate against each other, wilbe mollified, and they will accord together a perpetuall peace: which so arriued. For first the Gouvernour, as if God had commanded him to repaire to the Bishop, obediently hastened thither, with as manie people as he could assemble, and found the Bishop in a great hall with his Clergie: where being together, one of the Religious which S. Francis sent to the Bishop, spake to them in this manner: Syrs, and deerlie beloued Brethren in IESVS CHRIST, the holie Frather Brother Francis being by reason of his infirmitie, vnable to come in person, hath sent vs hither, to sing you a canticke, which he hath made in the prayse of God. He beleecheth you by the loue which you beare vnto his Maistie, and to him, that you will deuoutly heare it, then

then the two Religious began with a loud voice to sing, the Gouvernour with his handes ioyned and his eyes lifted towardes heauen gaue eare vnto it, weeping for the great deuotion he had to the holy Father. The Canticle being ended, the Gouvernour loudly spake: I verily protest, that I doe not only desire to be reconciled and become freind to my lord the Bishop, whome I ought to acknowledge for my Superiour, but euen if any one had slaine my brother or sonne I would hartely pardon him: vttering these wordes he went to the Bishop, and said: My lord behold me ready, for the loue of God and his seruant the holy Father S. Francis, to doe what soeuer you shall enioyne me. The Bishop also being exceedingly qualified, answered: My duety was, and being a Prelate, I hold my selfe obliged to haue bin the first in action of humility and patience: wherein hauing failed, I repent me, and aske you pardon. And with those wordes full of loue and charity they embraced and kissed each other in token of amity, not without the infinite admiration and ioy of the assembly: sith no man had induced them, for which they also gaue thanckes vnto God.

How much the spirit of prophesie assisted the holy Father S. Francis.

THE CXVII. CHAPTER.

T Here came one day three yong Florentines to aske the benediction of the holy Father S. Francis: wherof the porter hauing aduertised him, without vttering one word he went into the garden, where he gathered fve figges, wherof he gaue two, vnto two of the three yong men that came to visitt him, and the other three vnto the third, to whome he said: within few dayes you shalbe one of mine, the hauing giuen them his benediction he dismissed them. And shortly after, this yong man became a Frere Minour, and proued very pious and exemplary. When S. Francis gaue his benediction, it was in these termes: The name of our lord IESVS CHRIST be blessed and his sacred passio, the most holy virgin that brought him foorth with all the celestiall Court. Therefore being one day in prayer, the virgin Mary appeared vnto him, and gaue him the fairest aple that could be imagined, saying vnto him, that as that gift was precious, euen so as often as her Sonne heard these wordes with deuotion vttered: The name of our lord be blessed, it was exceeding gratefull vnto him, and he so much esteemed them as if some matter of high worth were presented vnto him: and therefore the holy Father did afterwarde more often vse them.

S. Francis residing att Grecio, where he tooke phisicke for his eyes, the Phisition being one day come to visitt him, he inuited him to dine

in

*S. Franc.
purposely
inuitd to
dinner a
Phisician
against
all appa-
rence.*

in the Couent, who dwelling not far thence, neuer accustomed to eat there: neuertheles he was att this time content to stay in regard that S. Francis had so inuited him: But the Guardian being by commandemēt of S. Francis and in his name aduertised therof, he retourned answere that there was nothing wherwith to entertayne him. S. Francis sent him reply that he should cause to be prepared the hearbes and bread which he acknowledged to haue, and should leaue to God the care of the rest. Now as they were sitting downe att table, there knocked one att the gate, where the porter found a woman that brought a great basket on her head, full of bread, egges, fish, cheefe, fruit, and other thinges, which a lady had sent them three leagues distant from the Couent, which being ioyfully receaued by the porter and sett on the table, euery one admired thereatt. By meane of this miracle they vnderstood the wordes of the S. when he bad that the care should be left to God: And when he limed, the Guardian also sending him word that he was ashamed to entertaine the said Phisician hauing nothing wherewith all. So they were more confirmed in the beleefe they had of the prophetically spirit of S. Francis, and the Phisician said to the Religious: verily Brethren we doe not know the sanctity of our Father: For I stayed only in respect of him, reioycing to eat this day with you by deuotion, of your grosse refection: but he hath wayted then to inuite me, when he knew by propheticall spirit, that here would be a plentifull repast. The Religious replied that it was particuler vnto him, to foretell what was to succeed, without euer sayling therein.

Of other like cases of Prophecie.

THE CXVIII. CHAPTER.

*S. Franc.
procured
pardon
of God
for the
Apostasie
of one of
his Reli-
giow.*

A Religious of the Order deluded by the deuill, forsooke Religion and vnder coulour to liue more perfectly, became a Pilgrime. But committing manie offences, he reflected on his error, and with great humilitie went to the holie Father, who seeing him, shutt himselfe into his celle (att the merueillous astonishment of all his Religious, for he accustomed to shew himselfe verie milde and gracious to the penitentes that retourned vnto him) whence when he came forth, his Religious demanded of him why he shutt himselfe in: he answered that he ran to the armour of prayer, to assisist that Religious & to defend him from the handes of the deuill, whome he saw ouer him, and that he had presentlie obtayned the victory. Retourning then to wardes the said Religious, Brother, said he, our lord God hath pardoned thee: but be carefull that the deuill, vnder pretence of any other

san-

sanctitie deceaue thee not againe, and cause not thee, for any other stepmother what soeuer to forsake thy true mother: which he perfectly obserued, perseuering in his Order all the time of his life.

This that followeth is taken out of the 22. chapter of the sixt booke, because it is the beginning of the matter recounted, euen to the place here recorded.

The holie Father S. Francis passing through Tuscanie, Brother Macie his companion walked a litle before him to discouer the way, and comming into a parting way, where one might take his course either towards Florence, Sienna, or Arezza, he asked S. Francis which way they should tourne, who answered, as it shall please God. Brother Macie replied, how shall God shew vs his will herein? By thee, said the S. and withall commanded him vnder obedience to tourne and not to rest, till he commanded him. Brother Macie was no lesse ready to obey then he should haue bin to commande, yea he tournd so much that he many times fell to the ground by the giddines he felt in his head with often tourning, and desisted not, though the passengers stayd to behold him, and derided him as an idiott, till S. Francis with a loud voice bid him to stay, which done, he asked him towards what place he was tournd, and he answered, towards Sienna. Goe on then to Sienna said the holy Father: whither being come, the greater part of the nobles and gentlemen mett them and with exceeding deuotion accompanied them to the Bishopperick, where the holy Father S. Francis preached vpon occasion of two men that by ciuill sedition had then bin slaine. And by his preaching he so wrought, that before his departure he reconciled them all: by which worcke, more diuine the humane, it manifestly appeared that it was Goddes will he should come thither. This holy Father finding himselfe loaden with the prayes of men (which he esteemed an intollerable burden) he one day priuately departed the towne, without speaking a word to any man.

The sequel of the aforesaid hundredth chapter.

Brother Macie thefore that followed him murmured a litle to himselfe, at his litle good manners in departing from the Bishop without taking leaue of him, & for making him turne as a foole in the middes of the way the day before: but perceauing afterwarde that it was a deceit of the deuill, he very bitterlie reprehended himselfe affirming that he deserved hell, for presuming to iudge of the S. as opposing against the diuine worckes by him wrought, as a verie true Angell of the liuing God, in such or like manner accusing himselfe. The holie Father tourning to him, said: Proceed bouldelie, Brother Macie, for this thy last discourse is euen so of God, as thy former was of the deuill. Brother Macie then so much more humbled himselfe as he more

How S. Francis made Br. Macie to tourne to know the Will of God.

S. Francis knew the thoughts of Br. Macie that murmured with himselfe.

approved the admirable sanctity of his holy Father.

*Of one of
his Reli-
gious
that was
troubled
to fre-
quent his
company.*

An other Religious had a great desire to conuerse with him; but he abstayned fearing to offend him by knowing his great imperfections: doubting withall, that offending the purity of his soule, he should also vtterlie loose his fauour. These thoughtes beingentierly reuealed vnto S. Francis, he one day called him to him, & said: Brother, I know you desire to conuerse with me, speake therfore, and say freely what you will, and come to me when you desire: by this meane the Religious was so secured, as he remayned more affected vnto him. These thinges wherby the prophetic of the holie Father Sainct Francis was generallie manifested, are almost infinite: therefore hauing hereafter recited two or three other, we shall haue ended all that may be collected of all authors. God knoweth the rest.

How S. Francis prophesied the Papacy to Nicolas the 3. When he was yet a child. This is taken out of the 9. chapter of the 9. booke, and here put in his place.

Mathew Rimido a Romane gentleman, was an affectionate freind vnto the holy Father Sainct Francis: yea did afterward take the habitt of the Rule of the third Order, this man hauing one morning inuited Sainct Francis to dine with him, and presenting vnto him his sonne Iohn Caietan, then a litle child, who was afterward Pope Nicolas the third, to giue him his benediction: the holy Father tooke him in his armes, embraced and kissed him very louingly, and recommended vnto him his Religion, which procured great astonishment and abundance of teares of the Father present, and much more when he more plainly told him, that the child should not be Religious in habitt, but much in deuotion, and principall Lord of this world, and protectour of his Religion. The holy Father vsed one of his ordinarie exercises of humility with this gentleman, out of the very hartie loue he boare to holy pouerty: which was, that being inuited by him and comming att such time as he was not att home, where certaine new seruantes not knowing him gaue diuers poore people to eat within a Court, he likewise receaued almosse and did eat together with them. The Lord Mathew comming home, and finding Sainct Francis to eat among the poore, he incontinently fate downe on the ground with him: where he would in like sort eat with the poore, and the S. to whome he said: Father, sith you would not dine with me, I must dine with you.

*S. Francis
did eat
With the
poore att
his freinds
house.*

The sequel of the said hundredth chapter.

Brother Iohn Bonello, a Religious of great perfection, held a generall chapter

chapter in Prouence, in the monastery of Arles, where he was Prouinciall Minister. S. Antony of Padua preached att that chapter vpon the title of the holy crosse. It there happened then that a Religious Preist called Brother Monaldus of a very exemplare life, saw ouer the dore of the Chapter in the aire, S. Francis, with his handes and feet stretched on a crosse: and as he was, he blessed all the Religious, loosing his righthand from the crosse, whiles S. Antony most profoundlie expounded the said title of the crosse. Wherefore, the spirituall consolation which they all then felt in themselves was such and so great, that albeit Brother Monaldus alone saw the said S. present, neuertheles they all did participate of the grace: in such sort that if any one would not haue beleueed the relation of Brother Monaldus, he was contrayned to be assured thereof, by that which he had felt in his hart. Besides many other like apparitions of the said S. by diuine permission, wherein God would demonstrat how neere our soule is (when she wil receaue his grace) vnto the diuine light, and eternall wildome, by communication wherof, she ariseth from the world, to vnite herselfe with God, making the humble and poore of spirit, Prophettes, reuealing high mysteries vnto them, as it made Dauid, one of the principall prophetes, afterwards S. Peter and the other Apostles, according to the saying of the Gospell: *Many things I haue to say to you: but you cannot beare them now: But when he, the spirit of truth, cometh, he shall teach you all truth:* and in these latter dayes, his humble and simple seruant S. Francis. For as he did chose the Apostles, simple and idiots, in regard of the learning of the world, he neuertheles made them famous by doctrine and diuine workes; and the Shepheard Dauid, to feed the sheep of the sinagogue transported out of Egypt, and S. Peter the fisher, to fill the nettes of the holy church, with the multitude of faithfull Christians: so he would haue Sainct Francis a merchaunt, to teach vs to traficke and negociate for this precious stone of the Euangelicall life, selling all his goodes, and distributing it to the poore for his loue: and to enrich his church with soules redeemed by this holy meane.

S. Franc. liuing & being in Italy appeared to a Religious in the prouinciall chapter held att Arles in Prouince.

Iohn. 16.

How the blessed Father Sainct Francis, renounced and rendred in the handes of his Brethren, the office of Generall of the Order, and instituted a Vicar Generall in his place. This was the 31. chapter of the second booke improperly, and therefore, to follow the true Order of his life, We haue here put it in his place.

This B. Father was so zealous of obediēce, & especially of that his most holy humility, that he could in no sort dispose himselfe to cōmaund: so that it was irksome vnto him to performe the office appertayning therevnto,

as to haue the chardge of gouerning so many thousandes of Religious, to commaund and reprehend, to aduise and correct, to giue ordonances, and to chastice the offenders. Therefore, he resolu'd to renounce the office of Minister Generall, as well for the cause hereafter alleadged, as the better by example to teach obedience vnto his children. Besides he found himselfe too sickly, so that he could not apply himselfe to that office as was requisite: and yet would not omit the rigour of his penance, to conserue his body, yea he was better content to continue sicke, then by neuer so litle relenting his austeritie, to be cured of his infirmities: the occasion was reasonable, to free himselfe piously of such a chardge. And therefore, att the generall chapter held two yeares before he receaued of our Lord IESVS CHRIST his sacred stigmates, he publikelie renounced the office of Minister Generall, not without the exceeding greife of all the Religious, who by all meanes refusing, during his life, to admitt any other Minister, he was constrain'd to constitute a Vicar Generall, that gouerned the Order in his name; To this effect, he made choise of Brother Peter Catanio, his second sonne in Religion, a man of great prudence, and very expert to gouerne: to whome the holie Father promised his cheiffest obedience, and besides to him that should be constituted his Guardian. Which all the Religious seeing, they began bitterlie to weepe esteeming they should continue as orphanes, without the ordinary gouernment of their beloued Father, who comforting them the best he could, his handes ioyned, and his eyes eleuated towards heauen he said: My God, I recomende vnto thee this family, which to this houre thou hast recommended vnto me: For now, by reason of mine infirmities, other impedimentes, and iust causes to thee knowne, being vnable henceforward to haue care of them, I haue committed them to a Vicar Generall, and to other Prouinciall Ministers, who shalbe obliged to yeld thee a very exact account of them att the terrible day of the great iudgement; if they chaunce to perish by their negligence or euill example. And so the holy Father S. Francis thenceforward perseuered to be alwayes subiect, euen to the day of his death; surpassing the all in humilitie. Yet did he neuer faile to be very zealous in assisting and with his vtmost to fauour his Order, euen during the life of his first Vicar, who died att the end of the second yeare of his Prelature, in the Monastery of our Lady of Angels, S. Francis not being there when he was buryed. His body wrought so many miracles, that an infinite multitude of people from all partes flocked thither leauing a very great quantity of almose vnto the monasterie. The holie Father therefore comming thither, and vnable to endure either the one or the other, the former for distracting them all, and the latter for relaxation of the order
which

which he foresaw would grow of such quantity of almose, he wēt to the sepulcher where so many miracles were wrought: and to the deceased he vttered these wordes: My deerlie beloued Brother, as thou hast alwayes obeyed me during thy life, we being now by thine intercession molested with such a world of peopl, thou must also obey me after thy death. I therefore cōmand thee on obedience that thou worcke no more miracles, sith by them we are in dāger to be ruined. The deceased (which is admirable to consider) ceased vpon this commandement to worcke any more miracles: such is the vertue & power of holy obediēce, in a true and good Prelat, & in a true and good subiect, that it extendeth not onlie on earth and during life, but euen in heauen & after death. Yea by it, ceased the glorie and eminence of miracles, that exalt the honour of the liuing God, the more to magnifie him by the exercise of holie pouertie and the quiett retire from a turbulent applause of the world.

How S. Francis instituted his second Vicar Generall. This was the 32.

chapter of the second book, but is ther transferred to obserue due order of the history.

The miracles of Brother Peter Catanio, being now ceased as we haue said, the holie Father S. Francis, by aduise of the minifters, in place of the said deceased, subrogated Brother Elias, a man of singuler prudence, and verie learned, for which he was respected, not only of his Religious, but euen of seculer persons, Prelates and Princes. He gouerned as long as the holy Father liued, who the more to honour him, gaue him the title of Generall, though he were not so, for the reason aforesaid that the Religious would neuer accept other Generall then S. Francis during his life. The said Brother Elias attributing the said honour vnto himselfe and not to God, he made him know with all that his deepe prudence according to the world, was before him but a very sottish folly: for rising into pride, he fell as an other Lucifer, from such an hight to the deepest profunditie of these worldlie miseries, the great mercie of God, by the prayers of the S. redeeming him from eternall punishment as hereafter shall appeare.

This that followeth is the residue of 85. chapter already past, which we purposely omitted, as no proper place for it, as may easily be iudged.

The holy Father S. Francis being att table together with many of his Religious, he tooke some of the most remarkable in humility & simplicity that sate neere vnto him by the handes, and tounring towards the said Brother Helias, he willed him graciously to honour those other learned & noble Brethren sitting there. Brother Helias, extremly puffed vp in pride, without any respect thus answered: O Brother Francis, I doubt not but by your simplicity and carelesse negligence, you

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will

*S. Franc.
commandeth a S.
to worcke
no more
miracles
and he
obeyeth.*

*How
much the
third ge-
nerall of
the order
of Freer
Minors
forgot
himselfe.*

willl ruinate this whole Order. The holy Father more curious of his saluation then of himselfe, answered him; O miserable wretch, this pride which thou wilt not cast off, and this kinde of thy pafsionate behaiour to such euill purpose, wilbe occasion that thou shalt dye out of the Order. Which so happened, for he died out of the Order, in the Court of the Emperour Frederick the second, who was excommunicated.

*An Angel came
to speak
with
him.*

An other time the holy Father prophesied in this maner of this Vicar General; It hapened that Brother Helias was once called for att the dore of the Couent, by one that affirmed himselfe to be an Angell, sent vnto him frō God, and the porter did him the message, telling him that an Angell in humane shape expected him att the gate: musing therfore what this might be, he was a long time perplexed, yet att length he went thither, and the Angell propoled vnto him this doubt, whether it were lawfull for the professours of the gospel, to eat of what soeuer was indifferently presented vnto them or no. Att this proposition he rested vtterly confounded, for he had purposed to be author of a new constitution in the Order: which was that the Freres might not eat flesh, against their first holy Rule: wherfore he rudely and cholerickly shurt the dore against the Angell, and returned into the Couēt. Which being reported vnto S. Francis, he incontinently arose frō prayer and went to his Vicar, whome he sharply reprehēded saying: Brother Helias you haue done ill in shutting the gate against the Angels, when God sendeth the to iustruct you. I tell you therefore it is impossible for you to perseuer stable in the Order, with this pride. The holy Father spake thus much vnto him because it had bin reuealed vnto him that he should die out of the Order, and besides, that he should be damned, in respect wherof he did euer after so disaffect him, that he could not endure to behold him, which was not long vnperceaued of Brother Helias: and therfore being verie cautelous and subtil, he so laboured and wrought by signes of humility and importunity that he gott knowledge of all, wherewith he was so terrified and amazed, that with abundant effusion of teares demanding pardon of S. Francis, he neuer ceased to supplicate him, that considering he was also, by the passion of our lord, one of the sheep of his fold, he would not abandon him, but that like a good Pastour as he was, he would please to reduce the strayed sheep vnto the flock, and so deliuer him from eternall death; alleadgeing that vpon chaunge of the sinners life, God could easily reuoke his sentence. Father said he, such is my confidence and deuotion vnto you, that were I in hell it selfe, I would hope to come forth vpon your prayers for me: so that I am fully assured that if you please for me to implore the diuine mercie, my sentence shall be reuoked. The holie Father, moued by these prayers, could not att length denie him; so that with a very great seruour he

he entierly cast himselfe into the armes of God, in such sort praying for this lost soule, that God answered him, that he should doe penance for his sinnes, and should not be damned, but for dying out of the Order he could not be otherwise satisfied, and so itarrued, for he dyed out of the Order, with manie signes of contrition, according to the opinion of some in the habitt.

*This that followeth is of the aforesaid 32. chapter of the second booke, the better to obserue the Order of all that appertaineth to renou-
tiation of the office of Generall.*

The holy Father S. Francis being by a Religious freind of his entreated to tell him what had moued him to make that renouintiation, and to committ it to the chardge of another, as if they were not his children, who had bin such made, nourished and instructed by him, he answered: know my child that I loue you all more deeply then any man can imagine, and if all would follow my will, I would loue them more, and would not haue left their administration. But I haue bin constrained therevnto, because there are many Religious that esteeme more of the aduice of some of their superiours, by whome they are drawne to other matters, by example of the auncient, and which is directly contrary to my rule, and so they make very litle esteeme of mine aduertisemētes: but in the end, they wil more euidently find their errour. The holy Father being on a time as it were oppressed with his infirmities, and hearing some speake of the aforesaid matters, and particularly of the ouer-much indulgence of the superiours, and of the euill examples they gaue their subiectes, he lifted vp his head and cryed out, Ah! ah! couer me, couer me, who are they that withdraw the Religious from mine Order, and from my way, and my examples? If I once goe to the Generall chapter, I will shew my Brethren what is my desire, and mine intencion, that they permitt not themselues to be deluded.

Being also an other time sick, a Religious said vnto him: O Father, it seemed that att the beginning our Religiō we strued to liue in al austeritv and pouerty, we were poore in our habitt, in our diet, in our dwelling, in our moueables, in our bookes, and in all our other corporal necessitvies, for which we tooke no care: by reasō of this pouerty exterior, the interior daily proceeded frō good to better, because we were al of the same seruour, of the same will, with one cōsent cōspiring to the entier obseruance of our rule, and alwayes to giue good exāple to our neighbour, finally we obserued the gospell the most exactly that we could. But of later time, it seemeth that the purity of this our first vocatiō, is much deminished, vpon excuse that it cā no longer be obserued as before, by reason of the great multitude of brethren: yea there are some that beleue that the people are much more edified by this their moderne and new inob-

S. Franc.

prayed

for him.

Why S.

Francis

renoun-

ced the

office of

Generall.

inobseruance and mortification of their proper will and of their senses, then they were when they all liued in such deep austerity of life: and they thinke it a matter more Religious to liue after this new manner, the according to the ancient and former, which they hold for crowned, as proceeding of simplicitie and holy pouertie, which were the foundations of this our holy Religion. Now perceauing this, and beleuing that you likewise perceaued it, and are therewith exceedingly displeased, I meruaile you doe not labour with all speed to hinder the further progresse of this euill, nor doe correct it whiles you haue power, and meane to doe it.

S. Francis hauing with great affliction of spiritt heard this long discourse, thus answered: Our Lord IESVS CHRIST pardon you that which you suppose I ought to doe, which I am not obliged to haue care of, neither by charge, nor by office: for whiles I was Generall, though from the beginning of my conuersion I haue almost continued in sicknes, I haue not yet failed either in cogitations or effectes, to satisfie my duety, both by example and gouernment. But hauing well considered that God did daily encrease the number of Religious, and that they already began to leaue the secure, strict, and difficult way, wherein they first walked, and in such sort as you say strayed from it, without correcting themselves notwithstanding all my demonstrations, predications, and good edification that I gaue them, I then resolued to leaue the office of Generall, as I did, and though when I renounced it, I failed not at the chapter to excuse my selfe by mine infirmities, as was partly true: alleadgeing that by meanes therof I could no longer discharge so burdensome an office: Neuertheles my sonne, I assure you if the Religious would now liue conformably to my rule, and to my pious intention, I would againe accept the office of Generall, and would excute it so long as it should please God to giue me life: considering that so, the care of that charge would not be painfull vnto me, for certaine it is, that whē the faithfull subiect knoweth the good will of his superiour, he strueth to obey him in euery thing, so that it is no great difficulty to gouerne him, yea I should reioyce and be exceedingly comforted, in their spirituall progresse, and in the honour that thereby redoundeth to his diuine Maiesty: and though I should be continually sicke on my bed, yet should it not be tedious nor troublesome vnto me to giue them content in all thinges: but because I see I can no longer discharge mine office, which is spirituall, and opposite to vices, in correcting them either by loue, or by aduertisement, I will not retourne (to the charge) to be their executioner, chasticing them with the rodde of disciplin, as the princes of the world doe iustly correct their rebelles: neuertheles I hope in God that the inuisible enemies the deuils, that are his executioners to chastice the

the disobedientes in this world and in the other, will also chastice the transgressours of the vow of their profession; therby to their shame and forcible, to make them retourne to their first vocation: to this effect I will not omit to asist them whiles I liue, at least by prayers and example, fith otherwise I cannot, and to instruct them the secure way, which I haue learned of my God, as I haue formerly done, that they may haue no excuse before his diuine maiesty. No further doe I hold my selfe obliged. Such was his answere, which satisfying the Religious, procured an inestimable greife to all the hearers: wherby it also manifestlie appeared, what reason the S. had to leaue them, and what occasion they had to know themselves, and by a pious acknowledgement of their fault and true repentance, to haue recourse vnto him.

*The end of the first booke of the Chronicles of the
Friere Minors.*

ii

THE





THE SECONDE BOOKE
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS.

WHERIN IS PROSECVTED THE
discourses of the life, death, and miracles of the Seraphical
Father S. Francis, translated out of french
into English.

*Of the plenary indulgence graunted by Iesus Christ to the Church of
our Lady of Angels. of Portiuncula.*

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



1223.
Three
yeares
before his
death.

HE more the glorious Father S. Francis
profited in perfection, and endeaoured to
vnite himselfe with God, the more did he
poure out teares, and felt intollerable greife
att the losse of soules redeemed by the
price of the precious blood of our Redeem-
mer IESVS CHRIST. Wherefore
not ceasing to desire mercie of God for
sinners, as he thirsted to haue all saued,
the yeare of grace 1223. being to that ef-
fect in prayer, an Angell appeared vnto
him, and bid him, incontinentlie to repaire vnto the church, because
our Lord IESVS CHRIST with his glorious Mother and a great
number of Angels there expected him. Hauing receaued this gracious
embassadge, he hastened thither and there found our Sauour sitting in
a Royall throne, on the high altare, and the Virgin Mary att his
right hand, enuironned with an innumerable multitude of blessed
spirittes. The holy Father incontinentlie falling prostrate on the earth,
heard the diuine voice of IESVS, saying: Francis, Know that I haue
heard

heard thy seruient prayers: and because I know with what solicitude thou and thy Religious procure the saluation of soules, aske me what grace thou wilt for their soules benefitt, and I will graunt it thee. The S. being by such an answere emboldened, most humbly answered: My Lord IESVS CHRIST, I miserable and vnworthy sinner, with the greatest reuerence I can, require of thy diuine maiesty, that it will please thee so much to fauour all Christian people, as to graunt them a generall pardon and plenary indulgence of all their sinnes; I meane to all them that shall enter into this church, confessed and contrite. I also beseech thee, O glorious holy Virgin mother, and our Aduocatrix, that it would please thee to make intercession to thy most gracious sonne for me and for all Christian sinners. Our Lady was instantlie moued with these wordes, and began in this sort to pray our Redeemer in his behalfe: O my most high Lord and sonne of my bowels, I beseech thee graunt vnto this thy faithfull seruauent this grace which he hath demaunded with so great a zeale of the saluation of soules, which thy selfe aboue all other thinges desirest. My God graunt him this grace in this place, to thine honour and the edification of thy holy church. Our Lord sodenlie answered: Francis that which thou demaundest is great: but this thy desire conformable to mine, deserueth much more, and therefore I graunt thy request. But goe to my Vicar, to whome I haue giuen al power of vnbinding and binding here on earth, and in my name demand it of him, which said, he disappeared. The Religious that had their celles neere therevnto, saw the splendour, and heard some speach, but durst not approach for reuerence and great feare that possessed them.

The holy Father S. F. hauing thanked God, presētly called Bro. Macie, in whose cōpany he wēt to Perusia, where thē was Pope Honorius with his court: befor whose holines he thus spake: Holy F. I haue reestablished a church that was very ruinous & desert, called S. Mary of portiūcula, very neere vnto the city of Alsise, wherein are residēt your Religious the Frere Min. I beseech your holines by our Redeemer I. C. & his most glorious mother, to voutsafe for the benefitt of the soules of all faithfull Christiāns, to graūt a plenary indulgēce and remission of all their sinnes, to all them that shall visit this church in good estate, without giuing any alms in the same. The Pope answered him that the Apostolike see did not accustom to graunt indulgēs without giuing of alms, because it will that they be gayned by thē. He thē asked him for how many yeares he desired the indulgēce S. Francis answered: Holy Father I desire not yeares, but soules? How soules said the Pope. S. Francis replied: I require that euery Christian confessed and contrite, that shall come to visit the said Church, receaue plenarie absolution in earth and in heauen, and that

*Confir-
mation of
the said
indulge-
nce by the
Pope.*

of whatsoeuer finnes he shall haue committed from his Baptisme to that very houre. I require not this in myne owne name, but in our Lord IESVS CHRIST, who hath sent me to your Holines. Which the Pope hearing, inspired of the holy Ghost, he thus spake thrice with a loud voice, I am content to graunt it as thou hast demaunded it. But the Cardinals present, aduised the Pope to consider well what he graunted: because by that act he would destroy the indulgences of the holy land, and of Saint Peter and S. Paul att Rome, which would no longer be regarded. The Pope answered, that he would not reuoke what he had att that present graunted. They replied that att least it were requisite he should limitt the said indulgence to a certaine time, and moderate it to a certaine prefixed day of the yeare. The Pope then said: We graunt to all faithfull Christians, that being truly confessed and contrite shall enter into the Church of our Lady of Angels, plenary indulgence and absolution both of paine and fault: and we will that the same be of force for euer, for one entier day, that is, from the first euenfong till the sunne sitting of the day following. Which the holy Father Saint Francis hauing obtayned, he kissed his feet: then demaunded his benediction: which receaued, he arose to depart. But the Pope recalling him, said: Whither goest thou simple man, what specialtie hast thou of the indulgence obtayned? The holy Father answered that his word should suffice: and besides, that this worck was of God, and therefore, it should be published and supported by his diuine Maiesty: and withall, that he would haue no other Bull, but the Virgin Mary, IESVS CHRIST for Notary, and the Angels for witnesses. Which said, he departed, and by the way stayed at the hospitall of leapers, where making his accustomed prayer: it was reuealed vnto him by our Lord IESVS CHRIST, that the indulgence which he had procured, was confirmed in heauen, wherof hauing aduertised his companion, they both returned to giue thanckes to his diuine maiesty.

How the day of the said indulgence was miraculously assigned from heauen.

THE II. CHAPTER.

*The deu-
il tempt-
eth S.
Francis.*

THe day wherein the said indulgence was to be gained, was not yet prefixed: S. Francis being come to the Couent of our Lady of Angels, and being about midnight in prayer in his celle, the

the deuill appeared vnto him in forme of an Angell, saying: O poore Francis, why seekest thou to dye before the time? why doest thou consume thy complexion by so long watchinges? knowest thou not that the night is made to sleepe, and that sleepe is the principall nourishment of the body? thou art not yet old, why then wilt thou thus kill thy selfe? Were it not better for thee to conserue thy life, therein to serue thy God longer, and to profit the holy church and thine Order? Beleeue me therfore, and spend not thy life in such superfluous prayers and watchinge; only mediocrity pleaseth God. Which the holie Father hauing heard, and knowing it to be a delusion of the deuill that tempted him exteriourlie by his voice, and interiourlie by his suggestion, arising from his prayer, he stripped himselfe naked, then cast himselfe into a bush full of very sharpe pricking thornes, wherein he touned and wallowed till the blood euery where trickled downe, and doing the same, he thus discoursed vnto his body: Ah my body! it had bin better for thee to contemplat the palsion of IESVS CHRIST then to endure this, for hauing in vayne repined and searched the delightes of the world. Thus discoursing, a great light appeared vnto him in the middes of the ice that was there, (it was in Ianuary) and in the bush of thornes he saw very beautifull roses white and vermillion, and a venerable troupe of Angels that filled all the way euen to his church, and one of them called him, saying: Come Francis, for our Lord expectethe thee, and in an instant he miraculously found himselfe cloathed. So knowing him that called him, he gathered twelue white roses and twelue vermillion, then went through the way all tapestred with Angelicall spirittes towards his sweet Lord, before whose feet he fell in great reuerence, and then presented these twelue roses vnto his diuine Maiestie, that appeared sitting on the said high altare, as the other time accompanied with his glorious mother, and assisted with an innumerable multitude of Angels, to whome he said.

Most gracious lord & gouernour of heauen & earth, sith it hath pleased thee to graunt me the plenary indulgence for this church, I most humbly beseech thee to voutsafe also assigne the day wherein it shalbe gayned. I herein coniure thee by the merittes of thy most glorious mother our aduocatrice, that it please thee to appoint the same by thy diuine mouth. Our Lord answered him: I am content to satisfie thy desire: and therefore, I assigne thee the first day of August from the euen-song of that feast, wherein is made memory how I deliuered myne Apostle S. Peter from the chaines of Herod, vntill the sunne setting of the day following. But tell me if thou please my Lord, said the holy Father after he had giuen him thanckes, how shall the world

*to make
him leaue
prayer.*

*S. Franc.
cast, tur-
ned and
wallo-
wed him-
selfe all
naked in
a bush
full of
thornes.*

*S. Franc.
gathered
vermillio
& white
roses in
Ianuary.*

know it, and knowing it, how shall it beleue it? Our Sauour replied, I will consider therof in time conuenient: but in meane while retourne to my vicare, and carry with thee some Religious that haue seene this apparition, and giue him some of these Roses, and he shall incontinently confirme thee the day, and cause the indulgence to be published. The holy Father vpon obedience tooke three white and three vermillion roses, and whiles our lord disappeared, the Angels sung. *Te Deum laudamus* and S. Francis gaue him thanckes, who presently went to his holynes with Brother Bernard Quintaualle, Brother Angelus of Rieta, and Brother Ruffinus who had seene this great vision. Being before the dore of the church, he found the Pope returned from Rome, to whome he yelded account of what our lord had told him, calling his companions for witness, and presenting him the said Roses. The Pope hauing attentiuely heard him, and being vnable to satisfie himselfe with beholding the said Roses, so fresh and sweet, and therewithall so rauished, as he could no longer containe himselfe, he sayd: Ah good God, such roses in Ianuary, to make me beleue what they haue sayd! these alone are sufficient: therefore he said to S. Francis, I will consult with my Cardinals how thy request may be accomplished, then will giue answere, and with those wordes dismissed him. The next day he repaired againe vnto his holines in the Consistory, where by the Popes comendement he once more recounted all the successe, and the day which God had prefixed vnto him: The Pope the said, sith we are certaine of the will of our lord IESVS CHRIST the true and soueraine Bishop, whose place, though vnworthy, we hold on earth, we alio in his behalfe doe graunt, the plenary indulgence for perpetuity, to the foresaid church on the day before mentioned.

How the said indulgence was published in the church of S. Mary of Angels.

THE III. CHAPTER.

BVt that so great an indulgence might be published by Apostolical authority, the Pope wrote to diuers Bishoppes of the valley of Spoleto, and particularly to the Bishop of Alsife, within whose diocese the said church was, and to the Bishoppes of Folliniū, of Agubio, and of Nocera, that they should be all present att S. Mary of Angels the first day of August, to consecrate and publish the said indulgence, that there had bin graunted by diuine reuelatio and Apostolicall permission, att the request of the holy Father S. Francis: who taking the said letters and thancking the Pope, he departed with his companios with great reuerence and humility to deliuer the to the said Bishoppes, praying them in the name of God and his holines that they would not faile on the said day

day to be present in his Church, there to performe what was enioyned the. After that, he returned to Afsisū where he caused to be prepared a great scaffold for that effect: that the sayd Bishoppes might the more commodiously and better be vnderstood of the people. The day determined being come, the Bishoppes entred into the said Church, where being ascended on the scaffold, they said to S. Fran. that though they were come thither to publish the indulgence as they were ready to doe; yet they thought it more requisite, that himselfe should first declare vnto the people, whē and in what sort it had bin graūted him by God and the Pope, which done, they would confirme it. The holy Father answered the: though I be not worthy to speake in your presence: yet as most obedient seruāt, I will performe your cōmand. Ascēding therefore in the pulpitt, he made a sermō to the people that thither by Goddes prouidence were abondātly flocked from all the neighbour places, with an extreme seruour explicating vnto the this so great treasure, which he performed with such deep doctrine, that it seemed rather the discourse of an Angell, the of a mā vnlearned as he was. Att the end of this sermō, he denounced vnto the people in the name of God & his most sacred mother, the indulgēce, in these words: *Whosoever being truly cōtrite & cōfessed, shall visit this church the first day of August, from the euen song therof, and the night and daie of the feast it selfe to the sunne setting, he shall gaine a plenary indulgence, which is graunted him first by God, & secundarily by his Vicare Pope Honorius, and the same to cōtinue for euer on that day.* The bishoppes there present cōfirmē the speech S. Frācis, would not accord to that for euer. The bishop of Afsisū therefore cōfirming the indulgēce to the people, purposing to li- merr it to ten yeares, could neuer vtter it: but was cōstrayned to say: *for euer*: the like happened vnto the other bishoppes. This miracle being very euidently knowne vnto the people, it encreased their faith, & preuēted the doubt which some might haue had, that God himselfe had not graūted this indulgēce. Therefore the publicatiō being ended, the bishoppes being exceedingly amazed att the miracle, did with great solēnity consecrate the said church, which continued for euer endued with this great treasure, to the glory of our lord, his holy mother the virgin Mary, and his seruant S. Francis, and to the soules health of all Christians.

*A mira-
cle in
publica-
tion of
this in-
dulgence.*

Of certaine miracles wrought by God in confirmatiō of the said indulgence.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

IT pleased God besides the fore mentioned, to cause this so great indulgence to be beleueed and reuerenced in due mannner, for the publike good, by such miracles and reuelations as we shall now relate. The yeare following a great number of people being come

*A doue
was seen
to fly in
the aso-
resaid
Church
the day
of the
said in-
dulgence.*

come to gaine the said indulgence whiles they watched by night in prayer vnto God in the said church, there arose in a moment such a rumour among the people there assembled, that the Religious who were att rest, were awakened therewith. Comming therfore into the church they saw a Doue whiter then snow, that flew fūe times about the Church. One of them stepping forward the better to see, came neere the high altare, where he found Brother Corrado of Offeida a right holy Religious, of an exceeding exemplare life and famous for miracles, whome he prayed to lett him better vnderstand the occasion of the great murmur that was among the people who verie pitifull cryed out. This venerable Father answered that he was content to tell him: conditionally that he would promise not to reueale it to any person during his life. Which being conditioned, he said: I saw the Queene of heauen to dissend, cloathed with an ineffable splendour as holding her Sonne in her armes, and to giue her holy benediction vnto all present: then this Doue which was with her on the altare began to fly, to signifie the visitation of God, it hath here flowne round about the church. Which the people seeing, though they knew not all, began thus to crye out towardes heauen. The same day the mother of our lord was seene to enter into the Church with the Religious, and to accompanie the ordinarie procession, with a great troupe of Angels that sung prayes vnto God. This was seene by Religious of pious life, and also by certaine pilgrimes.

*The deuil
cōfesseth
the ver-
tue of
this in-
dulgence.*

As (in the Marquisat of Ancona) one coniured the deuill, that vehementlie afflicted a poore possessed woman, to enforce him to tell what course was to be vsed to expell him: he answered att length, that he tormented not the woman for any sinne of hers, but onlie to the end God might be prayesd by her, and that therefore there was no other remedie to deliuer her, but to procure her to gaine the indulgence of our ladie of Angels; and that he spake thus much as forcible cōstrayned to speake against him selfe: as he likewise confessed that by the same indulgence he lost a great multitud of soules which he already held as his owne, by reason of the enormous sinnes they had committed. The woman was therefore with great affliction and greife brought to our ladie of Angels the verie day of the indulgence: and as soone as she was entred the effect succeeded, for the deuill lifting her into the aire departed, and the poore woman fell as dead to the ground: But by the merittes of the glorious Virgin, she incontinentlie arose verie found of bodie and soule, hauing bin confessed to gaine the indulgence.

There are besides, manie true testimonyes to whome haue appeared the spirittes of diuers deceased, reuealing vnto them, that hauing cer-
taine

taine dayes before their death, gayned the said indulgence, they were sodenlie by the glorious Virgin Mother conducted into Paradice without feeling any paine of purgatorie: others also gayning this indulgence that was applyed vnto them by forme of suffrage after their death, by meane of some liuing freindes, were deliuered of the paines of Purgatorie, as by this ensuying discourse shall appeare.

A Venetian Gentleman that was a verie spirituall Preist, desiring to gaine this indulgence, as he prepared himselfe to goe thither he fell sicke and of the same sicknes dyed: but before his death, he said to a very freind of his: My good freinde, I desire you to beleue, that there is no man in the world of my kinred or whooeuer other, in whome I haue more confidence then in your selfe, nor of whome I hope to obtaine what I desire for the saluation of my soule: I therfore pray you, that if it please God to call me vnto him, you will vndertake so much labour as to goe to our ladie of Angels, to gaine the plenaire indulgence for the benefit of my soule: and to defray your chardges in the iorney, demaund what you will and I will giue it you, that the indulgence being mine, you receaue no detriment therby. This freind took what was requisit for his expences and promised to goe. Now this Preist being dead, and the time of Pilgrimage being come, his deere freind, though he saw manie that prepared them selues to the iorney, he, as if he had made no promise, deferred his iorney, purposing with himselfe to goe the yeare following, which is a thing but too ordinarie to ingratefull persons, kinred and freindes neglecting and forgetting the poore deceased; the Preist appeared to this vnworthy freind in his sleep the same night that he had made the foresaid purpose, and with an angry countenance reprehending him, he said: Goe on thy iorney now with such as prepare themselves thereto. He awaking determined to doe that for feare, which he had neglected to doe for respect of amitye. Hauing effected the promise, the same day that he entred into the church and gayned the indulgence for the deceased, the Preist in the night ensuying appeared vnto him, not as before in choller, but bright and resplendent as the sunne: and thanked him and reuealed vnto him that then when he entred into the church, he entred into Paradice.

Of other miracles of the same indulgence.

THE V. CHAPTER.

THis famous indulgence being diuulged ouer almost al Christendom, there departed from Sclauonia about twenty pilgrimes to gaine this Iubiley: but landing att Ancona, and there hauing

visited the principall churches, they repayred to a monasterie, where were shewed them many precious reliques. The Sacristine, that shewed the asked the whither they went in Pilgrimage: they answered, to our Ladie of Angels, to gaine the indulgence wherof the day approached. The Religious then said: O simple people to endure heat, incommodities, and trauailes, without anie benefit: for there is no such indulgence as is spoken of, or at least there is no authentical bulle of the Pope extant therof, I blame you not to goe of deuotion to that church of our lady: but for the indulgence I tell you your iorney is in vaine. And if you beleue me, you shall saue much of the way: for there are here in this church far more indulgences then in that whither you goe, which if you be well aduised you may gaine, and so retourne againe. In confirmation of his speech, he shewed them many priuiledges and bulles of Popes, of lardge indulgences graunted to that church. The Pilgrimes vpon these considerations beleueing the Sacristine, and repenting the wearisome trauaile they had vndertaken to come so farre, followed his counsaile, and hauing offered their deuotions in that place, and gayned the indulgences there to be had, determined to retourne. Amongst them was a verie deuout woman, that said vnto them, I meruaile, my freindes, you are not ashamed vpon the opinion and discourse of one only man, to loose the merit of your pilgrimage? Retourne you in Goddes name, if you thincke good, for my part I am determined to goe alone to visitt our lady of Angels, though there were no indulgence in that church, and so to accomplish my iorney so much aduanced: so went she alone towards Alsium. But by the will of God, that she might not trauaile alone, she erred from the direct way, being therefor much troubled and sollicitous how to finde the ordinary way, there appeared vnto her a right venerable old man all gray, cloathed in a long habitt Religious-like, who said vnto her: Feare not my daughter, for I assure thee thou art in a secure way for thy soule, and know that thy companions shall instantlie ioyne vnto thee. She looking behinde her, saw them all, wherat she was exceeding ioyfull: being then together, this venerable old man told them, that they had done well to prosecute their attempted iorney, because the said indulgence was true, and that himselfe was present when the Pope Honourious confirmed it: and that he knew it also to be confirmed of God: though there were many that knew not all that, and that denied it, and therefore bid them goe on confidentlie. And after he had made them a worthie exhortation, to persuaide them to offend God so much no more, he vanished in their presence, leauing them exceedingly comforted and thanckfull vnto God. Coming to Alsium they manifested this

this accident, and hauing gayned the indulgence, they ioyfullie tooke their iorney of retourne. Theaforefaid woman by reason of a sicknes that happened her vnto, remayned alone behinde: but dying afterward, she ouertooke them in spirit, and appeared vnto them on the sea, and said vnto them: Feare yee not, for I am such a one your companion, that am dead att Afsisium. The Virgin Marie hath sent me to assure you of the vertue of the plenary indulgence; wherbie I passed incontinentlie to heauen, without enduring the least punishment, which said, she disappeared. Wherefore many of thole Pilgrimes that saw this woman on the sea, retourned often times with greater faith to gaine the indulgence, and recounted the apparitions: so that though no bulles were seene, Sainēt Francis not respecting them, many of diuers nations, repayed thither, when neither warre nor plague did hinder them: for God who graunted it and promised to sauour it also with his grace, besides the reuelation therof vnto many, did also inspire soules to seeke the pourchase of their saluation in that holie church.

An old man, comming to gaine this indulgence recounted what he had heard spoaken by a Pilgrime that first doubted therof: to witt, that being in a solitarie place, where he recommended himselfe to God, he seemed miraculonslie to see the Pope, the Cardinals, and S. Francis, conferring together; and that according to the gestures and motions they vsed, it seemed that the Pope would giue the bulle of this indulgence to S. Francis, who refused it, and one of the Cardinals standing vp, tooke a booke in his hand, wherein he read these wordes: *A plenarie indulgence of all sinnes att S. Marie of Angels, graunted in earth and confirmed in heauen*, and turning leafe by leafe, he still read the same thing, and hauing tourned it all ouer, and so read the said booke, the vision disappeared, and the pilgrime to his great contentment rested fullie satisfied, of the meritt and vertue of the said indulgence.

The Bishop of Afsisium named Illuminato, diuers times made relatiō of a gentleman a very deuout pilgrime, to whō (being by some dissuaded from going to gaine the said indulgence) there appeared, as he was in prayer, a Religious man, in habitt of a Deacon, cloathed in white, and exceedingly glittering, who thrice said vnto him: *The indulgence is true, come securely*. Being so assured by the true Deacon of I E S V S C H R I S T S. Francis, with great confidence repayed thither, in all his iorney diuulging this indulgence, wherof he so much doubted before being related by other: he recounted this his vision to the said Bishop of Afsisium.

Certaine Pilgrimes comming from the marquifate of Ancona to

gaine the said indulgence, they mett some yong men; who vnderstanding by them whither they went, one of them deridingly said; that indulgence whither you goe is as true, as that I hold in my hand that swallow that flyeth in the aire: which hauing said, he instantlie saw the swallow in his hand, att which miracle both the pilgrimes and those present, were all amazed: the said yong man acknowledged his fault; and accused himselfe, the Pilgrimes confirmed in faith, proceeded on their iorney, euery where recounting what had befallen them to the praise of God, so highly zealous of the saluation of miserable soules.

Gerard de Fighnio being very pafsionately amorous of an honest woman, to whom he could in no sort gett to speake, by reason that she was almost alwayes retired in her houle, and accompanied when she went abroad, he attended an occasion (the deuill hauing already led him into error) when, according to her custome, she should of deuotion goe to our Lady of Angels, hoping either in the way, or in the church, some opportunity would be offered of speaking vnto her: the time being come, he ioyned himselfe in company with many deuout personnes, that went with the said woman to gaine the indulgence; but the men being a litle separated from the women, his first hope was vaine, and his second more: for it miraculously happened that he could neuer see her in the church, though he well saw all her company. Wherefore acknowledging his fault, and repenting it, he confessed himselfe, gayned the indulgence, chaunged his life and behauiour, yea so far forth, that he shortly after became Religious, where he liued and dyed vertuously.

What sanctity Saint Francis would haue obserued in that church.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

AS well in respecte of the accidentes afore recited, as diuers other which God wrought in this holie church, the holy Father Saint Francis avouched, as being reuealed vnto him, that it was loued of the Virgin Mary with a particuler deuotion aboue all other churches of the world. Therin were also graunted verie great graces to the said holy Father, and prerogatiues generallie and particulerlie, for himselfe and for others: and therefore, that the Religious might neuer forgett with what deuotion and reuerence they ought to respect that church, and

and that particuler memory might be had therof aboute all the memorable thinges of the Order: being one day sicke in presence of his Vicar Generall, and many other Religious, in manner of a testament he left these wordes: I will that this house and church of our Lady of Angels of Portiuncula, be duely reuerenced and honoured of my Religious, and that therein be the residence of the Generall of the Order; that he may prouide vnto this house a pious family, with greater deuotion and dilligence, to the end it may serue for example and mirour in piety and good conuersation; and especially that there be chosen very spirituall Preistes and Clarkes, to minister with deuotion, that the Religious and seculers comming hither to gaine this holy indulgence be well edified thereby: and likewise I will that the lay Brethren be chosen humble and of vertuous life, and that they serue the Preistes, with much respect and reuerence. I will besides that in this place be obserued a perpetuall silence, and that if there be necessity of speaking, they speake only with their superiours and among them, be very wary not to recount worldlie matters, or other idle wordes, yea that themselues giue no eare in such thinges to seculer personnes, to the end that no worldly matter enter into this holie house, and that the Religious may the better conferue their holy pouertie therein. And with all that this habitation be not prophaned by earthly discourtes: but that therein the time be alwayes employed in himnes, prayers, and psalmes, the most secure armour for guard of the hart. And if any religious herein already placed, become and libertine a obserue not this Order and course of life, I will that the Guardian expell him, and put an other, such as he shall thinck fitt, in his place. To the end that if other Religious and monasteries established, wheresoeuer els where doe erre from the puritie due to their estate and to their vocation, and vow made to God, this holy place att least, blessed by our Lord, may remaine and perseuer as a mirour and example of true Religion, and euangelicall perfection, and may be a candlestick before the throne of God, and the glorious Virgin Mary, euer burning and giuing light, for whose sake God may pardon the faultes and offences of all the Brethren of the Order, and that this plante of our Religion may be for euer conferued, producing fruites worthy of merittes, and so obtayning the most holie grace of God.

Such was the Order of the glorious Father S. Francis, which was seriously obserued of his first Religious, nourished and educated with the purest milke of sanctitie, who knowing how much this place was loued of IESVS CHRIST and his sacred mo-

The sanctitie of the first Friar Minors of Asise.

ther, liued alwayes in this house, in highest purity, in perpetuall silence, and in extreme pouerty. When they chaunced to speake some litle out of the time of silence, their discourses were of spirituall thinges, of benefittes receaued of God, of our ingratitude, of his mercie, and all with exceeding great humility and deuotion. And if by misgaid it happened, which it very seldome or neuer did, that some one of them began to speake some thing that was not of God or more necessary, he was incontinently reprehend by the others, and did penance for it att the same instant. In this place they mortified their flesh, not only by watching and fastinges: but also by disciplines, nakednes, and the rigour and austerity of their habitt, supporting the one in sommer, and the other in winter, and the lay Brethren by labouring in the feeld to gaine bread, and to maintaine themselves, and the other Religious by such and other vertuous exercises, sanctifying themselves, and the place where they dwell. A very deuout Religious being yet in the world, saw once in vision a great nombre of people, kneeling before this church, with ioyned handes and eyes eleuated towards heauen, all blinde, who with loud voice required mercy of God, powring out abondance of teares, and beseeching the diuine Maiestie, to voutsafe to restore their sight: which prayer, ended, he saw descended from heauen an exceeding great light, that illuminating all the place, restored sight to the blind, vpon which vision he after ward became Religious.

How saint Francis instituted the second rule, and of the Apostolicall Bulle of Pope Honorius, against the professed that leaue the Order.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe Religion of the Frere Minors daily augmenting and manie entring therinto without well measuring their forces before, by their weaknes of spiritt, their first seruours incontinently decayed, wherfore being vnable to continue firme vnder the hammer of Euangelicall life, leauing the habitt, they went out of the Order, worse, by reason of their apostasie committed, then they entred in. Others without leauing the habitt, went wandring ouer the world, others, the rigour being not then so seuer, liued att libetty; affirming that they were not bound to obserue a rule that was not confirmed, nor approued by the holy Apostoliklike sea, but only *uiue uocis oraculo*, by the mouth and voice of Pope Innocent the third, and approued, but not priuiledged by Pope Honorius his successor.

The

The yeare of grace 1221. which was the fift of his Papacie, his holines, for the reasons aforeſaid made his breuet following, two yeares before the ſecond rule was confirmed.

This following is the ſaid Breuet, extracted out of the 32. chapter of the tenth booke, and transferred hither as its proper place.

Honorius biſhop and ſeruant of the ſeruantes of God, to our beloved ſonne, Brother Francis, and to other Superiours of the Frere Minours, health and Apoſtolicall benediſtion. Becauſe according to the opinion of the wiſe, one ought to doe nothing without counſaile, that being done no repentance enſue; It is therefore neceſſary to him that will orderly and duely diſpoſe a ſpirituall life and one more excellent then ordinary, that he ſett his eyes before his feet: that is, that he precedently make good triall of his proper forces, with the rule of diſcretion, that he happen not (which God for bidd) to looke backe and be conuerted into a pillar of loſt ſalt, for not hauing ſeaſoned his ſacrifice with the ſalt of prudence, remainyng as he that is vn wiſe without ſauour and ſalt, if he be not ſeruent: and ſo he that is ſeruent, ſhalbe fooliſh and vnſauoury, if he be not wiſe: therefore it is moſt prudently ordayned in all Religious, that they who are to promiſe reguler obſeruance, doe formerly make good triall therof, for a certaine time, to auoyed occaſion of repentance: for ſo he cannot lay any excuſe on his temeritie or ignorance. For this cauſe, we by the tenour of theſe preſentes, forbid you to admitt any perſonne to the profeſſion of your Order, if he haue not firſt made an entier yeare of probation, and alſo we ordaine that after the the ſaid profeſſion none preſume, to forſake the Order, and that no other receaue him, hauing left the ſame. We alſo make prohibition, that none goe out of his obedience, with the habitt of the Order, nor doe corrupt the puritie of true pouertie. And if any preſume to doe it, we authoriſe you his ſuperiours to execute againſt ſuch, the eccleſiaſticall cenſures, till he retourne to obedience. Lett none whoſoeuer attempt to infringe theſe preſent letters of prohibition and benefitt, or to oppoſe againſt them: for if any one preſume ſo to doe, lett him be affured to incurre the indignation of God, and of his bleſſed Apoſtles S. Peter and S. Paul. Giuen att Viterbium, the 22. of September the fift yeare of our Papacie.

This is the prohibition which ſainct Francis alleadged in the ſecond chapter of his rule.

Tho

Besides all this, it was thought necessary, *Ad perpetuam rei memoriam*, for a perpetuall memorie therof, and for the assurance and stabilitie of the order, to confirme the said rule by Apostolicall authoritie. Therefore the Cardinall Vgolino, Protectour of the Order, prayed the holie Father S. Francis to abridge it, for it had bin much augmented by reason of manie new accidentes that happened from hand to hand. He prayed him, I say, to moderate it in certaine thinges, that it might be more easy, to execute and to learne by hart, and that he would procure it to be for euer confirmed by an Apostolicall bulle. S. Francis vnderstanding this, would know if such were the will of God, as in all matters of importance that he enterprised, he accustomed to doe: and therefore taking leaue of the Cardinall, telling him that he would shortlie giue him answere, he had recourse to prayer, where he made supplication to God, that he would reueale vnto him what he should doe, who was raiued in spiritt, and had this vision: It seemed vnto him that he heaped together a quantitie of crummes of bread, which he was to share amongst many Religious, who together with himselfe were as it were hunger-starued, and because the crummes were too small, he was carefull how to deuide them that they might not fall through his fingers: but he heard a voice that said; Francis make one entier hoste of those crummes, and then giue it to them that will eat it. Which hauing done, it seemed vnto him that all they who receaued it not with deuotion, or misprised it, were entierlie couered with leprosie, which vision, he not so plainelie vnderstanding as he desired, praying againe the day following, and perseuering in demanding counsaile of God, he heard the same voice that said; Francis the crummes of bread of the last night, are the Euangelicall counsailes, the hoste the Rule, and the leprosie malice, The holy Father then knew, that he should vnite his rule, and compose it of the Euangelicall counsailes, compendious and mysticall.

Hauing therefore giuen answere to the said Cardinall, that he would confine his rule, conformably to the will of the diuine Maiesty, and taking with him Brother Leo, and Brother Bonifius of Bologna, he wēt vp to the mount Camerio, neere Rieta, otherwise called Fonte-Colombo, where fasting with bread and water forty dayes and forty nightes, and persisting in continuall prayer, he wrote and composed his rule, as God reuealed vnto him, then came downe with it from the mountaine, as an other Moyse, with the tables of the law, and committed it to the keeping of Brother Helias, who was his Vicar Generall, who

per-

perceauing it to consist of a greater contempt of the world, and of a more strict pouerty of life, then was gratefull vnto him, so dest that the rule was lost and perished, that it might not be approued and confirmed by the Pope, with intention to make an other according to his fanſie. But the holy Father that would rather follow the diuine then humane will, making no esteeme of the wife of the world, and knowing in spiritt the fayned cogitations of that Religious, resolved to retourne to the said mountaine, by fasting and prayer more copiously to obtaine the will and rule of God, for his seruantes the Frere Minors.

Now Brother Helias to interrupt this his second attempt, called an assemblee of many learned superiours of the Order, where he began to discouer his peruerſe intention, alleading vnto them that Brother Francis intended to constitute a rule so strict and austere, that was impossible to be obserued, and that he would procure it to be confirmed by the Pope for euer. Which they hauing heard, they with one accord answered: that they yelded all authoritie vnto him: and that sith he was his Vicar Generall, he should go to him, and tell him that they intended not to keepe the rule he made, but that it should be for himselfe alone if he would. But Brother Helias fearing to be reprehended of S. Francis, encouraged them, and perswaded them to goe with him: and so they went in companie to the said mountaine, and being called by Brother Helias, he knew his voice, and came out of his celle, and seeing so many Religious, he asked Brother Helias what they would, who answered: they are superiours of the Order, who vnderstanding that you institute a new rule, they and I fearing we shall not be able obserue it, doe protest vnto you, that we will not oblige our selues therevnto. S. Francis made no other anſweare to this protestation, but falling on his knees, and casting his eyes to heauen, said; My God, did I not tell thee, that these people would not belecue me; and att the instant a voice was heard that sayd. Francis, as in this rule there is nothing of thine, but all commeth, and is of me, so also I will that it be obserued. *Ad literam, ad literam, ad literam*, without glosse, without glosse, without glosse, I know the infirmitie of man, I know also my will to assisist him. Therefore, they that will not obserue it, lett them depart the Order, and permitt others to keep it: S. Francis then tourning to the superiours, said: haue ye heard, haue ye heard, haue ye heard? would ye know more? hereatt they were so confounded, that trembling as besides themselves, they departed acknowledging their error and not replying one word, the holy father then retourned to accomplish the rule, entierlie conformable to that which God had precedentlie reuealed

vnto him. This was in the yeare 1223. fiftene. yeares. after the Order confirmed by Pope Innocentius.

The S. did afterward carry this rule to Roome, and deliuered it to Cardinal Vgolino his Protectour, who presented it to Pope Honorius, together with the holy Fasher, who reading it vnto him, and the Pope considering the feuerity and rigour therof, layd: that it seemed to him very difficult to be obserued. The S. answered: I beseech your Holinesse to beleene, that there is not in it, so much as one word of myne inuention, but that our Lord I E S V S. CHRIST, hath composed it, who well knoweth what is necessary and behoufull to the saluation of soules, to the profit of Religious, and to the conseruation of this Order. Therefore I neither can, nor ought, to alter any point therof. The Pope then, inspired of God, and for the zeale he had to Euangelicall perfection, which by this rule, S. Francis planted in the church, said to himselfe: Blessed is he that, being inspired by diuine grace, shall with fidelitie and deuotion obserue this rule: sith what is contayned in it is Catholicke, holy, and perfect: and so in perpetuall memory, by the insuyng Apostolicall Breuy, he confirmed the same.

The bulle of confirmation of the rule of the Frere Minors, by Pope Honorius the thirde.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

Honorius Bishop and seruant of the seruantes of God, to his beloued children, Brother Francis, and all other Frere Minors: health and Apostolicall benediction: Because the Apostolick sea hath alwayes accustomed to fauour the iust desires and vowes of them that require it. We therefore condescend to your pious petitions (children beloued in our Lord I E S V S. CHRIST) which are, that we confirme the rule already approued by Innocentius the third our Predecessour, as is cited in the present letters. We now by the Apostolicall auctoritie which we haue, doe confirme the same, and doe corroborate it vnto you by vertue of this present Breuy. The rule is such as followeth.

The

THE SECONDE RVLE OF THE FRIER MINORS.

approved and confirmed by Apostolicall Breuy of Pope
Honorius the second.

*In the name of God here followeth the rule and life of the
Frere Minors.*

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

THe rule and life of the Frere Minors is thus; to obserue the holy gospell of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, liuing vnder obedience, without possessing any thing of proper, and in chastitie. Brother Francis promiseth to Pope Honorius and his successors canonically elected, and to the Romane Church, obedience and reuerence: and the Religious are obliged to obey Brother Francis, and his successors.

How they who desire to lead this life, are to be admitted.

THE II. CHAPTER.

IF any one inspired of God, will enter into this Religion and espouse this kind of life, when he shall haue imparted his intention to some Religious, lett him be sent to the Prouinciall Minister, who and no other, is permitted to receaue the Religious. The Minister being informed of his desire, ought dilligentlie to examine him touching the Catholick faith, and the sacramentes of holy church, if he be obedient and giue satisfaction herein, he shall proceed further and aske him, if he be not married, or being so, if his wife be entred or intend to enter into some Monasteries of Religious women, by permission of their Bishop, hauing first both together made vow of chastitie, they must also be of age, that no sinister opinion be conceaued of them. The truth of all this being vnderstood, and no other impediment consisting, lett him be instantlie aduertised of the gospell that saith: Goe sell all thou hast *Matt. 19.* and giue to the poore: and if for some lawfull impediment, he cannot doe it; his goodwill shall suffice. Lett the Brethren and their Ministers be very wary, not to respect his temporall affaires, but lett them leaue it freelie vnto him to dispose it as he shall finde him-

selfe inspired of our lord: and if the said Nouice demanda Counsaile concerning this point, of his superiour, he may send him to some man fearing God, by whose counsaile he may distribute his substance to the poore or otherwise art his pleasure. And all this done the habit of probation may be giuen him, which consisteth of two coates without capuce, and a cord for a girdle, and the linnen breeches with the Caperon reaching euen to the girdle, vnles it sometimes seeme to the said Ministers otherwise conuenient. The yeare of probation expired, the Nouices shalbe receaued to obedience, making vow to obserue this rule euer during their life. It shalbe in no sort permissable vnto them after the said probation, vnder whatsoever pretence to goe out of Religion conformably to the commandement of his holines: for as the gospell saith: No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is apt for the kingdome of God. Lett there be giuen to them that shall haue already promised obedience, a coate with the capuce, an other without it: those that will and are constrained by necessitie, may weare sockes. All the Religious shalbe clothed with course cloth, which they may peece with lacking & other patches with the blessing of God. I admonish and exhort them, not to misprize nor iudge rashly of the mé whome they shall see clothed deliciously and in diuers colours, and doe liue and feed themselues with delicate meates; but lett each one iudge and misprize himselfe.

Luc. 9.

Of the course and order to be observed in saying diuine service, and in fasting, and how the brethren ought to trauell ouer the world.

THE III. CHAPTER.

THe clarkes shall say the diuine office, according to the Order of the holy Romane church, except the psalter, when they may haue breuiaries. The lay Brothers for their matines, shall say twenty foure *Pater nosters*, for laudes, siue; for prime, third, sixth, and ninth houre, for each, seauen; for euen song, twelue, and for compline, seauen; and they shall pray for the dead, All the Brethren shall fast from the feast of Ascension, to the Natiuity of our lord: as also the lent of forty dayes that beginneth after the Epiphany (it was consecrated by our lord IESVS CHRIST, with his holy fast) they who shall fast it of their proper will shalbe blessed of God, and they that will not fast it shall not sinne, nor are obliged vnto it: but all ought to fast the lent before the Pasche of the resurrection of our lord. This rule doth not binde to fast any other time but the friday: but in case of necessity, the Religious shall not be obliged to corporall fast. Now I counsaile; ad-

admonish, and exhort my Religious in the name of our lord, that when they shall goe ouer the world, they vse no disputes nor cōtentious wordes, nor iudge il of any personne; but that they be curteous, mild, humble and modest, speaking religiously to euery one, as is requisite. And they ought not to trauell on horseback, if they be not constrained by manifest necessity or infirmity. Entering into houses, lett them say: Peace be in this house. And according to the gospell, of all meates that shall be presented vnto them, it shalbe lawfull for them to eat. Matt. 10.

That the Brethren ought not to receaue mony.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

I Absolutelie commaunde all the Brethren, not to receaue any kind of mony, be it by them selues or any third person; yet for necessity of the sicke and to cloath the other Brethren, it is ordayned that the Ministers and Guardians, shall haue care and cogitation therof only by spirituall freindes, according to the places and times, and as of necessity they shall see expedient: neuertheles persisting alwayes resolute as is said, not to receaue any kind of mony.

Of the manner of labouring.

THE V. CHAPTER.

THe Brethen that haue the grace of God to labour, lett them performe it faithfully with deuotion, and in such sort, that shunning idlenes, the capitall ennemy of soules, they extinguish not the spitt of holy prayer and deuotion, which ought to be preferred before all other temporall exercises. And as for the hire of their labour, they may receaue for themselves and their brethren whatsoeuer shalbe necessarie to the body, except mony, and this with humility, as is conuenient to the true seruantes of God, and to the followers of holy pouerty.

That the brethren may haue nothing proper, and of the manner of asking alms, and ministring to the sicke.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THe brehten may haue nothing proper, as houses, landes, farmes, nor other thing whatsoeuer: but lett them liue as Pilgrimes and

strangers in this world, seruing our lord in humility and pouerty, lett them goe confidently to demaund almose. And they must not be ashamed, being mindefull that our lord became poore for vs in this world. My most deere brethren, for this most high vertue of pouerty it is that you are instituted inheritous of the celestiall kingdome, by-our Redeemer IESEVS CHRIST, who making you poore in temporall substance hath enriched you with vertue, that with this portion of riches he may exalt you to the land of the liuing. I therfore pray you in the name of IESVS CHRIST, to possesse nothing in this world. In whatsoever place you are, be alwayes familier amōg yourselues, manifesting only to each other your necessities. For if the mother nourishe and loue her carnall child, with how much more diligence, ought each of you to loue and cherish his spirituall brother? And if any of the Brethrē fall sick, the other brethren ought to serue and comfort him, as themselves in necessitie would be serued.

Of the pennance to be giuen to the Brethren that shall sinne.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

IF any of the Brethren induced by the deuil offend mortallie in those kind of sinnes which are reserued to the Prouinciall Minister, lett him be obliged incōtinently without delay to goe to his Prouinciall Minister, who being Preist, shall enioyne him penace with mercy. And if he be not Preist, he shall procure him to be enioyned by an other Preist of the Order, as God shall inspire him, and as to him shall seeme most expedient; lett them be carefull not to be moued to anger or vexed at the sinne of an other: for choller & anger hinder charity in himselfe and others.

The manner of holding the Generall chapter att Pentecost, and of electing a Generall when there shalbe occasion.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

AL the brethren of this Order, ought alwayes to haue a Minister Generall & seruant of al the Brethren, whome they shalbe obliged sincerlie to obay. And he dying, his successour shalbe elected by the Prouincialls and Guardians att the Chapter held at the feast of Pentecost. Att which time the Prouincialls are alwayes bound to assembly euerie three yeares, more or lesse, in such place and according as shall please the said Generall. And if it seeme to all the Prouinciall Ministers and Guardians, that their Minister Generall is not sufficient for the seruice and common vtilitie of the Brethren, in such case all the Bre-

Brethren that haue authoritie to elect a Generall are bound to constitute, in the name of our lord, an other in his place. The generall chapter of Pentecost being ended, lett the Ministers and Guardians of euerie Prouince haue power if they please, to keep the same yeare a chapter in their iurisdiccions, assembling thither the Brethren that shalbe vnder their chardge and iurisdiction.

Of the Preachers.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

Lett not the Brethren that are admitted to preach, intrude themselves to preach in any bishoppericke, without permission of the Bishoppe: and lett no Brother presume to preach to the people, whome the Minister Generall hath not formerly examined approved, and admitted to the office of preaching. I also exhort and admonish the Brethren to haue great consideration in their preachinges, what wordes they vtter, to the end they be so pure and chaste that the people may be edified therby. Lett the reprehend vices, prayse vertues, discovering the punishmēt of the one & glory of the other, and lett their sermons be cōpendious of wordes: for our lord hath made an abbreviated word on earth.

*Esa. 10.
Rom. 9.*

Of admonitions and corections of the Brethren.

THE X. CHAPTER.

Lett the Ministers, as seruantes of others, be carefull to visit and admonish the Brethren that are vnder their gouernment: and as need shall require, lett them correct such as shall deserue it, but lett it be done with humility and charity. Being very carefull not to cōmand them any thing against our rule and the benefitt of their soules; & lett the Brethren that ought to obey, remember that for the loue of God they haue renounced their proper will. I therefore very strictly cōmand them to obey their Ministers in whatsoeuer they haue promised God to obserue, and to obey in their profession, provided that it be not in preiudice of their soules and of our rule. In whatsoeuer place the Brethren be, where they know they cannot spiritually obserue the rule, they may and ought to haue recourse to their Ministers; who must receaue them with benignitie and charitie, and giue them confidence and courage to discouer their necessities, and that with such familiaritie, as if the subiectes were the masters. For so is it requisite the Ministers be seruantes to all Brethren. I admonish all the Brethren in the

name

name of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, to be very wary of the great and enormous finnes of pride, vaine glory, enuy, auarice, and of cogitations and cares of the world, of murmuring and detracting their neighbour. Those who haue not studyed, lett them not regard to beginne the same: but lett them especially study to haue the spirit of God and his holy workes, to make continuall prayer with a pure hart, and to be patient and humble in sickneses and persecutions towards them that persecute, reprehend and contradict vs: for our Lord saith: loue your ennemyes and pray for them that persecute and caluminate you.

Matt. 6. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for iustice: for theirs is the kingdom of heauen: and he that perseuereth vnto the end shall be saued.
10. & 14.

That the Brethren shall not enter into Monasteries of Religious Women

THE XI. CHAPTER.

I Ordaine and command all my Brethren, that they haue no suspected familiarities with women: and that they enter not into the Couentes of Religious women, those excepted who to that effect shall haue speciall licence from the Apostolicall sea. Likewise I will not, that my Religious be God fathers either of men or women, that by such meanes there happen not any scandall among the Brethren, or by their occasion.

Of such as shall goe among the Sarrazins and other infidels.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

E Very Brother whosoever, that by diuine inspiration desireth to goe among the Sarrazins and other Infidels, lett him demaund leaue of his Prouinciall Minister; who shalbe very respectiue not to giue licence, but to such as to him shall seeme fitt to doe good among such people. And for all these causes, I commaund the Ministers vpon obedience to procure of his Holines to haue a Cardinall for Gouvernour, Protestour and Correctour of this Confraternity, that they may be alwayes subiect to the feet of the holy Romane Church, stable and firme in the Catholike faith. Lett pouerty, humility, and the holy gospel of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, be entierlie obserued of vs, as we haue faithfully promised.

The end of the rule of the Frere Minors.

The rest of the bulle, touching the confirmation of the said Rule, omitted in the beginning thereof.

Lett it not therefore be permissible for any man to infringe this ordonnance of our confirmation, or rashly to contradict the same. And if anie presume so to doe; know that he shall incurre the indignation of Almighty God, and of S. Peter and S. Paul his Apostles. Giuen att S. Iohn Lateran, the 29. of Nouember, the eighth yeare of our Papacie.

The end of the confirmation of the rule of the Frere Minors.

Of the perfection of this rule and the abridgement thereof.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

AS the three yong men (according to Daniel) were ioyfull in the flaming fire of the burning founace, where Nabuchodonosor had caused them to be throwne, as faithfull seruantes of God, because they would not giue to his monstrous statua, the honour dew to God alone, and as they sung prayses to the Almightye, together with a fourth like vnto the sonne of God: so there were three Orders and holy Rules founded by three holy personages, S. Basill, S. Augustin, and S. Benediſt, in the burning founace of temptations and worldly afflictions, wherwith the prince of the world, combatteth against the seruantes of God and often times surmounteth them, which holy personnes as men freed from the fire and from feare, haue with alacritie prayſed God, in the middes of it; Afterward there was seene the fourth, like vnto the sonne of God, to witt. The Seraphicall and crucified seruant of I E S V S C H R I S T S. Francis, that gaue a fourth estate vnto the church, wherin men, being deliuered from the prison of the world and taking more content in the honours and graces of God, might more free lie serue I E S V S C H R I S T. And such was his intention in all the wordes of his Euangelicall rule, to witt, that they who had made profelſion to imitate I E S V S C H R I S T, should endeauiour to become the most like vnto him in laboures of their life and exercises of spiritt, that possibly could be procured. He with the help of the holy Ghost, founded on that onlie and firme foundation of I E S V S C H R I S T, the edifice of the rule in meruaylous hight and perfection. Therefore in the first chap-

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ter

- The substance of the rule.* ter he saith: The life and rule of the Frere Minors is such: to keep and obserue the holie gospell, liuing vnder holie obedience, without possessing any thing in proprietie, and in pure chastitie. The life, spiritt and wordes of the said holy Father considered, his intention was, that the Frere Minors should obserue not onlie the preceptes of the gospell, but the counsailes also. Neuertheles knowing and considering humane infirmities, he would not oblige them to all. In the second chapter, he teacheth to forsake and contemne the world, with whatsoeuer is in it, giuing them meanes to make such renunciation as the gospell teacheth, which is, to sell what they haue and to giue it to the poore, that being deliuered of so great an impediment they might freeleie serue IESVS CHRIST, and with him say. The Prince of this world is come, & in me he hath found nothing. In the third he teacheth exercises to prayse God by the diuine offices, and by fastinges and seuerabstinenes, mortifications of the flesh, good examples and edification of our neighbour, and particulerlie of secular personnes. He also teacheth them the vertue of penance, humilitie and charity, whereby they may with edification conuerse with all people. In the fourth, he expresly declarereth, that he will not, his brethren shall haue mony vnder any pretence whatsoeuer: but that the Prouincials shall supplie their necessities, knowing that auarice is dangerous to soules, and principallie to Religious: and how true is the sentence of IESVS CHRIST where he saith, that no man can serue God and Mammon. The holy Father therefore would that riches should not onlie be remote, but entierlie and absolutelie separated from the Order. In the fift, he bannisheth from his societie, idlenes, as contrarie to the true seruantes of God, and capitall enemy of mennes saluation. In the sixt, he rayseth the soule fro cogitations of the world, and in as much as may be hoped or expected of him, leauing neither place nor affection proper in the, wherby they might adhere to any cogitation of terrestriall loue, to the end that they might ioyfullie say: *Our conuersation is in heauen*, as possessing nothing on earth.
- John. 14.* In the seauenth, he comforteth sinners and such as are sick, teaching the conditions of their Phisicion, that can and will cure them, who is our lord IESVS CHRIST, who will mercy, and not sacrifice, and who came not to call the iust, but sinners, that they might be conuerted and liue.
- Matt. 6.* In the eighty chapter, he teacheth the Superiours and all his Order, in what manner they ought to gouerne the Religious and insinuateth that they should procure to haue alwayes a Generall sufficient and worthy of such a charge. In the ninth, he teacheth his preachers, to fly pride, and arrogance in their life and doctrine, and to be humble and zealous of the saluation of soules, feeding them alwayes with holie and profitable doctrine, without which they can neuer produce fruit redound-
- Matt. 9.*
- Philip. 3.*

dounding to the benefit of the said soules. In the tenth, he admonisheth superiours and subiectes to be verie carefull in the diligent accomplishment of their obedience, and the obligation which is reciprocal between them, but particulerlie that which they owe and is due to God, by reason of their profession. In the eleventh chapter, he demonstrateth vnto his Religious, how they ought to shunne occasions of sinne and scandales, especially women. In the twelue and last, he reacheth them how they should expose their life for the loue of IESVS CHRIST and for his law, among Infidelles: Then he concludeth according to the beginning, shewing that all consisteth in the faith and obedience of the Romane church, and in the obseruance of the holie gospel of our lord IESVS CHRIST, who is our *Alpha & Omega*, that is, our beginning and our end. The holie Father S. Francis founded his life and rule, on these twelue Apostolicall chapters; as on twelue stones taken out of the depth of Iordain, that is out of the hight of Euangelicall perfection. This rule shall continue and be of force for euer as a testimonie vnto the professours thereof, that God hath already conducted them out of the desert of this world to the land of promise: Therefore of them may be said, as of other perfect: Blessed are the poore in spirit, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen: sith that for it they haue forsaken the kingdome of the earth.

Iosue 4.

Matt. 5.

Of the zeale which the holy Father S. Francis had vnto Religion and to the obseruance of the gospel.

THE X. CHAPTER.

THe perfect imitator of IESVS CHRIST, did so affect the obseruance of the holy gospel, & was so exceeding zealous of the rule, that with a singular benediction he enriched those that were singularlie zealous in the obseruation therof. Whereupon he said to his Brethren: our rule is a book of life to them that follow it, a hope of saluation, an earnest of glorie, the iuyce of the gospel, an assured way of the crosse, an estate of perfection, a key of Paradiſe, and an accord of eternall beatitude. He would that all his Brethren should haue it with them, and often times read it, and in their spiritual conferences and conuersations should for edification ordinarilie discourse therof: that often conferring therof together, they might neuer forgett this diuine pact and spirituall vow, and that they might so possess it in their handes, their bosome and before their eyes, that death assaulting them, they might dye with it in their armes.

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A Religious, dying among the Mores, as he desired, made his benefitt of this holy doctrine of his holy Father: for being taken by the Mores preaching the faith, and hauing endured many tormentes, and they intending to cutt of his head, he tooke his rule into his handes and falling on his knees, with great seruour and humility he said to his companion: my beloued Brother, I confesse me before God and you, of what soeuer I haue committed against this rule, and acknowledge my fault therin, and doe beseech you, to pray for me, and I doe, and will pray, for you. The wordes vttered his head was cutt off on earth, to be afterward crowned in heauen.

*In the 10.
chapter.*

But to the end that no impediment should hinder the obseruance of this rule, the holy Father S. Francis hath putt into it this clause, that when they suppose they cannot obserue it in some certaine place, they shall haue recourse to the Ministers: meaning that where the Religious know that the by reason of disturbers, corrupted condicions of the places, or obligations exposed against the rule, it cannot be obserued according to the true, not cloaked or erroneously interpreted intelligence therof, they may in such case and ought to haue recourse to the Ministers, who are obliged to putt them in such place, as they may without any impediment and contradiction obserue it. Brother Leo, and Brother Bonizzo, that were present with S. Francis when the Pope confirmed the rule, affirmed that when his holines very attentiuely read this clause (as also he did all the rest: therin manifesting himselfe to be exceedinglie well pleased therewith) he very particulerly reioyced theratt: which S. Francis perceauing, he said, that he would verie willingly haue added in that place, that if the Ministers would not provide for the said Religious, they might obserue the rule in what place it should please them: but his holines answered, that he had discreetly done in not inserting those wordes, because such licence might easilie cause the diuision of the Order, and litle respect vnto the superiours by manie who vnder coulour of such pretence would auoyde discipline. S. Francis replied, I would haue added it; because I know there will be Superiours in the Religion that will persecute such as would faithfully obserue the said rule: and if such licence were admitted, the poore Religious would auoyd persecution; but the Pope would in no sort giue consent, alleading, that it sufficed that by this rule the Religious Ministers knew their duetie, and his intention, without making more apparant specification which would take away both obedience and respect vnto the Superiours, and in steed of causing the obseruance of the rule, would entierly ruine it. Now that such was the intention of the S. appeareth by the example following.

A Religious Almaine, who was a great diuine, came to visit our holy

holy Father att our lady of Angels, where discourfing together of certaine pointes of the rule, the diuine faid vnto him: Father I vehemently defire to obserue the holy goppell and our rule fimplly euen till death, as I haue already promifed vnto God, according to his intention and yours, and I hope his diuine Maiefty well giue me force and vertue to performe it. Therefore I require this fauour of you, Father, that, if during my life, the Religious fhall erre from the pure obseruance of the rule, as it hath bin reuealed vnto you, and as you haue affirmed that they fhall waxe cold within fhort time: I may by your authority, either alone or with fuch as will follow me in the way of Euangelicall perfectiō, feparate my felfe from thofe that will not obserue it. Which demaund being well vnderftood of the S. with exceeding ioy he blessed him faying: know my Brother, that what thou requireft, is both by me, and by IESVS CHRIST, graunted thee, and laying his hand on his head, faid: Thou art a true Preift according to the order of Melchifedech.

Of a vifion that Brother Leo had, and the expofitoin made therof by S. Francis, and of a benediction which S. Francis left to his true children.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

BRothers Leo accompanying S. Francis that was very fick, had a merueillous vifion, which is very conuenient for this place, for fuch as are zealous of the Order, add no leffe, for fuch as difpenfe with themfelues in the profefion and obligation which they owe to his diuine maiefty. Being then in prayer neere vnto the S. he was rauifhed in fpirit, and was conducted to the border or fide of a violent and impetuous floud, and deuifing how he might paffe it, he faw certaine Religious that entred into it, but by the force of the water were prefently fwallowed to the bottome, without any more fight of them; and others that waded to the middest and almoft ouer it, but by reafon of diuers weightie thinges which they carried on their fhoulders, being ouercome by the violence of the water, were alfo drowned, without poffibility of any mannes afiftance. After thefe came other Religious vnburdened and without any weight: thefe were very poore, and entering into the floud did eafily and without any perill paffe the fame. Now S. Francis knowing by diuine infpiration that Brother Leo had had a vifion, and perceaing him much difquieted, faid vnto him: Brother Leo tell me what God in this prayer hath manifested vnto thee. Brother Leo incontinentlie recounted vnto him the circumftances of the vifion he had, praying him to expound it, becaufe he vnderftood it not. The holie Father failed not to comfort him, faying:

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ctity of
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know that all thou hast seene is true, the flood is this world, which with extreme impetuosity runneth to perdition; The Religious which are drowned in this flood, are such as accomplish not their Euangelicall profelson, and the strict and voluntary pouertie promised, but doe burden themselues with affaires of the world, which sinck them to the bottome: the second are such as hauing begun the way of God, arriue to the middes, but being vanquished by sensuality, and concupiscence of terrestriall thinges, forgetting their vowes, are by the violent streame ouerwhelmed and drowned: the third are such as hauing followed the spirit of God, and not of the world, haue not regarded to load themselues with the burden of the earth, but haue bin content, with one only habit to couer them, and a morcell of bread to sustaine their life, and to followe IESVS CHRIST naked on the crosse, and therefore without any perill doe passe to eternall thinges, whither they are called of God.

The sequell, is extracted out of the sixteenth chapter, of the 6. booke.

A Crucifix wal-
keth be-
fore S. F.
A scrole
discen-
deth frō
heauen
on the
head of
S. Franc.

THe said Brother Leo an other time saw S. Francis, hauing before him a crucifix that walked together with him, and rested when he rested: the face of the S. was illuminated with a splendour proceeding from the crucifix. The third time he saw descend from heauen vpon his head a scrole wherein was written, *Hic est gratia Dei*, the grace of God is on this man.

The proceſſe of the eleuenth chapter of the same booke.

THe infirmity of S. Francis vehementlie encreasing, in such sort that all the Brethren thought he would die, by reason that from the euening to the houre of mattines, he ceased not to auoyde blood, and had also very frequent accidentes happened vnto him; all the Religious began lamentingly to say vnto him: Father who after IESVS CHRIST haue ingendred vs in the world, how without you shall we remayne orphanes and desolate, depriued of your presence, with which our hartes were edified, and did walke in the seruice of God? Wherefore, O Father, doe you so leaue vs without a guide? Alas most deere Father, who shall comfort our feeblenes? who shall cure the infirmities of our soules? who shall giue moysture to the dried roote of our hart, that it persist in charity? With these vertues were conserued in vs, by your holy aduertisementes, and by the example of your holy life, and by these vertues we most strictly obserued Euangelicall pouerty. Giue vs, O Father, some consolation, if it be now your houre, because we who are here, in the name of all your children, that are and shalbe, doe demaund

demaund your Fatherly benediction. Leauē vs Father some memoriall in signe of your holy will, that God hauing called you vnto him, we as your most obedient children, may persist in the continuall exercises of your holy aduertismentes, and may say: Our Father deliuered vs such speeches, and recommended vnto vs such thinges att his death.

S. Francis intending to comfort them, caused to be called Brother Benediēt of Pirra, one of the most ancient of the Order, A Religious of great doctrine and sanctity, who was his Confessour, and said masse vnto him euery morning: he being come, the S. said vnto him: Write Brother Benediēt, these wordes which I leaue as a testament vnto my children. I giue my benediction to all them that are and shalbe in my Order, euen to the worldes end. And because, by reason of my extreme weakenes I cannot speake much, I declare my last will, and intention to all the Religious present, absent and that hereafter shalbe in my Religion by these three last wordes only. The first in signe and memory of my benediction and testament, I command you mutually to loue each other, as I haue and doe loue you. The second, that you loue and alwayes keepe holy pouerty which is my mistris. The third, that you be alwayes faithfull and subiect to the superiours, of our Order, and to all Preistres of the holy church, and that you be humble and respectiue vnto them.

But God who saw that his seruant was yet very necessary to this his flock, and that he should purchase himselfe a greater crowne in heauen, prolonged his life. S. Francis was absolutely contrary to those that desired and procured to haue priuiledges and exemption from the Pope, touching their life, because it had bin reuealed vnto him of God, that how much the Religious were priuiledged, so much the lesse fruit did they produce: he would that the intelligence of the rule should be taken of his wordes, being so cleare as they were, to any vnderstanding, provided that it were free from passiō: though they seemed very obscure to such as would not conforme their life therunto, but endeauoured to wrest & draw the sence to their libertine life: seeking against all equity to haue this their licentious life, called the life of Euangelicall perfectiō: And to proue this to be true, we see that those first children of the holy Father, so simple, vertuous, and pious, found no such difficulties therein, and the reason was, because seeking to imitate him, they simply vnderstood, and most dilligentlie obserued this rule, which many that were learned neither could nor can vnderstand with all their declarations and exclamations, of whome may be said, and not without reason that they would not, or will not vnderstand it, as it hath bin vnderstood of those SS. though they were simple and vnlearned.

What

What esteeme S. Francis made, of the great obligation which the Prelates haue towarde their subiects.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

THe S. was alwayes a vigilant Pastour, to gouerne the flock which God had committed vnto him, encourageing them to prayer, to fastinges, and to the obseruance of holy pouertie, and teaching them to imitate the highest master IESVS CHRIST, who began first to doe then to teach, himselfe doing the like, enduring many things only to giue example to his children. Being one day att the Oratory of S. Eleutherius, neere vnto Rieta, he patched his habitt within and without with course and grosse cloth, aswell against the violent cold that then was, as for the indisposition of his stomach, which the said patches did couer: he commaunded his companion to doe the same. But feeling that this peeing did comfort his body, he presentlie remembred the necessity of his Religious, of whome hauing compasion, he said to his companion: considering that I ought to be a mirour and example to my children, it is therefore necessarie that with them I endure cold, heat, & al other necessities that they endure: therefore though I feele this peice much to asswadge the greife of my stomackes infirmities, neuertheles considering that many of my Brethren may haue this infirmitie, who cannot receaue this consolation, I am enforced to suffer with them, to the end that when they shall see me also to endure, they may the more contentedly support their infirmities. This said, he incontinentlie rent of the peice, by this meane giuing to each one an example of perfection. God shewed vnto him how gratefull vnto his diuine maiesty is the example of Prelates to their subiectes, such as this was, in this admirable ensuyng accident.

He wold not that his habitt should be peeced against his stomack to asswadge the infirmitie therof.

How much superiours are bound to giue good example to their subiects.

Hauiug made a iorney to the Cardinall Protectour of his Order, vpon certaine affaires concerning the seruice of God, and after the dispatch of them, hauing taken leaue of the said Cardinall, before he departed the place, he went also to visitt the Cardinall of S. Crosle, a Prelate of exceeding great prudence and sanctity, and one that loued him well, of whom also he was most graciously entertayned, as of him that especially desired his conuersation. But vnderstanding that he intended presentlie to depart, and being exceedingly troubled that he could no longer haue his company, taking occasion of the time that was extreme rigorous to trauaile, aswell by reason of the coldnes of the season (for it was winter) as because there was then risen a violent

sent tempest of windes one the feildes, he said: My beloued Brother, this time is not fitt to trauaile in, therfore, I will that this day you rest your selfe with me, and afterwarde we will dispose our selues according to the time: in meane while, my soule shalbe some what comforted & edified; And that you may take no occasiō of discontentmēt against me, I promise to entertaine you in quality of a poore begger, and to giue you to eat as to other beggers: for he knew that to be the thing which the S. especially desired. He besides offered him a house, separated from his palace and solitary, where with his companion he might remaine without trouble, and there performe all his spirituall exercises. Besides all this, which much enclined the S.Br. Angelus was then with the said Cardinall (he was one of the first disciples of S. Francis) who much desiring to procure contentment to this Lord, began also to perswade the holy Father, telling him that neere therevnto was a solitary towre, where he might as conuenientlie make his prayer, as in his Oratory. In the end S. Francis being ouercome by those prayers, and by the time together, wēt with the said Religious to see the toure, which contenting him, he told the Cardinall, that to latisfie him, he was content for all that day to remayne with him: then he enioyned Brother Angelus, that he should not permitt any personne to enter into the said toure, whiles he should be there, that with his companion he might attend to his ordinary exercises without any interruption.

Now the first night, about the first sleep, the deuilles came in, & beate him cruelly: Wherevpon S. Francis called his companion, who was in a chamber neere vnto, to whome he recounted how he had bin handled by the deuill, saying. Brother, the deuils haue beaten me euen till this present, I will tell thee why, you must vnderstand that the deuils are executioners, & ministers of the iustice of God, and as an earthly prince, when one hath committed an offence, or enormous fact, doth send the Prouost of the Marshals to apprehend him, and then causeth him to be punished: so God the Prince of princes by his Prouostes and executioners, doth chastice and correct, euen thole whome he loueth, when they neglect to doe their duety towards his diuine Maiesty and their neighbour: and because the imperfect Religious doth often sinne by ignorance, when he knoweth not his sinne, he permitteth him to be chasticed by the said Ministers, to make him consider by what way he walketh, and dilligentlie to obserue in his exterior and interior, wherein he may haue offended: for God doth chastice in this present life, such as he loueth, and hath determined to saue, leauing litle or nothing to correct in the other life, which is to be eternallie glorious vnto them. Therefore, hauing now considered with my selfe, I did not imagine I had

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*F. Francis
is beaten
of the deuils.*

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fore.

offended him in any thing, his mercy considered, for which I haue not satisfied him, according to humane fragilitie, by confession and penance: and the rather because by the grace which he hath giuen, I knew in prayer althings, wherby I could please, or displease him: now nothing hauing till this present, bin reuealed vnto me, of this new accident, I am of opinion that God hath for no other cause afflicted me by his ministers of iustice, but for that the Cardinall hath vsed this charitie vnto me, deteyning me here this tempestuous season, though it were necessary for my debilitie: Neuertheles my Religious that now trauell ouer the world, enduring hunger, thirst, and continuall labours, and others that are within their poore celles and Oratories, knowing that I am with the Cardinall, will take full occasion to murmure, and say: we spend our dayes with so many miseries, and our Father resteth att his ease and in delighes and honours: And because I know my selfe to be bound to giue them alwayes good example, hauing bin by God committed vnto them for Pastour to that effect, and that my disciples are much more edified by me when I am with them in poore Oratories, keeping them company in holypouerty, then when I am with rich and honourable personnes, in place of corporall consolation, and that they more patientlie support their necessities, when they see or heare that I suffer with them: the fore I say, I acknowledge to haue exceedingly failed therein. As soone as the day appeared, the holy Father went to the Cardinall, to whome he related what he had endured that night, then added: Men that know me not, repute me a S. but behold how the deuills, who know me well, doe handle and chastice me for my finnes. So taking leaue of him, he returned to his Religious.

In this manner did S. Francis endeauoure to giue good example of himselfe to euery one, not only in small necessities and weake infirmities, but in the greatest extremities and afflictions of his life, to take away all occasion of murmure, and that his Religious might not iustlie say of him, that in his necessitie he could prouide well for himselfe, but not for them, considering that he endured such excelsiue dolours in his personne, without procuring any remedy, that the Religious who serued him, and they who knew it, could not containe their teares of compalsion, and sought out some one, who by prayers or authority might commaund him to applie some necessary medicines. And therefore there was no Religious that tooke not courage by his example patientlie to sustaine his proper and particuler infirmities and labours, in imitation of their cheife Pastour, as also misprife

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all corporall recreation, for the feruent desire they had to carry the crosse, for the loue of I E S V S C H R I S T, and to refine themselves in the vertue of penance.

Of the conditions which, according to the Will of S. Francis the minister Generall ought to haue.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis being once so weakened with sickness that his Religious supposing he would dye, did visit him extraordinarily, beginning to feeble the detriment proceeding from the losse of his presence: In regard wherof they were very carefull to demaund him many matters concerning the serenity of their consciences, and the obseruance of the Order. Now one of them who was very zealous of the rule and his profession, made him this demaund: Beloued Father, you shall goe towardes God, and your family, who to this day haue alwayes followed you, shall remayne in this vally of teares, forsaken of you their deere Father and assured Pastour. But since it will come to passe, and that there is no remedy, I most earnestly beseech you, before your departure to assigne vs one of our Order, if there be any worthy and capable to accept the charge and office of minister generall, after you. The holy Father with groning sighes and teares thus answered: my sonne I know not if there may be found a Father of so great a family, a head of so great an army of God, a Pastour of so great a flock, that would be sufficient: but I will leaue you a paterne & modell, wherein may be seene what he ought to be. The Generall ought to be a man of great prudence, of laudable reputation, and of holy conuersation, a man without selfe-loue, and particuler affection: because if he should more fauour one part then another, a tumult and discention with scandale would proceed therof: a man exceedinglie addicted to prayer, and a continuall practiser therof, and neuerthelessse, he should elect and choose certaine houres of the day and of the night, for the benefit and contentment of his soule, that in other houres he may attend to the government of the flock which God shall haue committed vnto him: the first houres of the morning, lett him repaire to the place where he is to pray and celebrate masse, recommending himselfe and his flock vnto the diuine protection. He must also be a man that after must goe forth into a publicke place, where all the Religious may commodiously speake vnto him, and must answer them with humility, prouiding for each one according to his necessity, as to him shall seeme best: lett him be a man of courage,

and constancie, that will not be moued with others wordes, but will gouerne with iustice, and therefore lett him not giue light beleeve to wordes that shalbe reported vnto him, but lett him first search to know the truth, then lett him proceed according to iustice, and lett him not disdayne to heare indifferentlie, the litle with the great, nor haue lesse care of the one, then the other, a man all whole actions may be so many exemplar good workes, God hauing giuen him grace to appeare such by his vertues: a man that hath imprinted in him the image of piety, of simplicity, and of patience, labouring to create vertue in himselfe and others, exciting euery one by his example to imitate him: a man aboue all other things detestinge mony, as that which is more able then any thing else, to corrupt our estate and profession: a man euer mindfull that he is the head and light, sett in an eminent place, that other Religious may see and follow him, to imitate him in his holy exercises: a man that is content, though he be Generall, with one only habitt, and one breuiary, where with to say his diuine office: one inck-horne and one seale, to prouide for the occurrants of the Religious of the Order, a man not ouer much addicted to the curiosity of learning, nor seeking to furnish his librarie, to the end he doe not robbe the diuine office and prayer, of much time consuming it in the study of learning: a man principallie of condition and conuersation, spiritually to comfort the desolate, as one that must be the remedy and refuge of the afflicted, for feare that this vertue and remedy not being found in him, it happen that his sheep, by their labour and vexation, be att length surmounted by the detestable and perillous disease of despaire: lett him be ouermore, a man fitt to humble himselfe, according to the example of I E S V S C H R I S T, and sometime to mortifie his sence, and particuler opinion, though reasonable, to gaine vnto God the soules of his subiectes, as did the Apostle S. Paul; a man that shutteth not the bowels of compalsion against the Apostatats of the Order: who are as strayed sheep, to whome he ought neuer to deny mercie, considering their temptations were very prompt, and lett him thinck that if God would permitt him to be tempted, he perhappes would fall into a deeper pitt: a man, that, if necessity sometime constraineth him to eate meat better then ordinary, he doe eat it publikelie and not in secret, that others may in like sort be in their necessities prouided for: a man that, being requisite for him principally to giue light and luster to obscure the darckned soules, doe seriouslie consider what he is to doe, that he may discouer the true and loyall path to passengers, amongst so many crooked, disordered, and confused wayes. A man not reioycing in the honours and

and fauours of the world, nor troubled in iniuries and afflictions: a man not defiling nor in any fort mitigating the worthy forme of iustice by impartiality, by desire of conseruing his honour, or reputation, or for whatsoeuer other respect, not correcting him that deserueth recompense, nor fauouring him that meriteth punishment: a man that by his ouer-seuere rigour is not occasion of the ruine or despaire of any soule, and that by his too tender compalsion causeth not sloath and negligence in his subiectes, or by long sufferance and indiscreet indulgence, occasioneth a dissolution in discipline: a man that doth know how to gouerne himselfe; to be of each one both feared and loued: a man, that att the first relation shall suspecte the accusations made against his Religious, till he haue duellie examined and gotten knowledge of the truth: a man, that with great feare of God, refuseth the chardge of such office, and the obligation of so great a Prelature, acknowledging himselfe insufficient of such dignitie, euer reputing honour to be a great burden. And finallie a man, that disdayneth not, yea procureth, as I would doe, and seeketh to haue for his companions, men adorned with holy vertues, whome he knoweth to desire nothing for themselues, but seeke only the honour of God, and the reformation of the order, the saluation of soules and of all the Brethren, and that both himselfe and they, giue to each one good example of themselues, comfort the Brethren in their afflictions, and appeare to all the Brethren a modell and patterne in the obseruation of the holie gospell and our rule, such ought to be my sonne the Generall of the Frere Minors. I would also that such a Prelate should be feared, loued and honoured of all, and that all his necessities be provided for, with a singuler loue, as true Father, and most louing Pastour.

Of a letter Which the holy Father S. Francis wrote to Brother Helias his Vicar Generall.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

THe holie Father S. Francis being sick, wrote this letter following to Brother Helias his Vicar Generall that gouerned and visited the Order. Brother, God giue you his holy benediction: I admonish you, to be alwayes patient in what soeuer you shall take in hand, and well disposed to support whatsoeuer accident may giue you discontent. And if you should be iniuriously offended by any of the Religious or other, receaue all as proceeding from the hand of God, man-

nifesting to the world that you seeke no other thing but to loue them, and to procure them to be the true seruantes of IESVS CHRIST. And therefore exact no more of them then that which God shall giue you, and herein I will know if you loue God, my selfe his seruant and your selfe, to witt, if whensoever any Frere Minor in the world hauing committed neuer so enormous offence commeth before you, he depart not without mercy, and though you afterward vnderstand that he sinned a thousand times, if yet you loue him more then you would my selfe: and though by reason of feare or reuerence he should not require pardon, you encouraging him shall demaund if he desire it: to the end that acknowledging his offence, he doe penance for it; and thus much to be practised especiallie towards the infirme. You shall not faile to admonish the Guardians to doe the like, and that they resolute euer to doe it. And therefore when it shalbe knowne that one of the Brethren hath offended and forgotten himselfe, lett not the other Brethren dishonour him, nor murmur at him, but lett them haue compulsion of his fragility, remembring that the sicke and not the healthie doe need the Physicion. If any Religious induced by the deuill, doe fall into any mortall sinne, I will that he be obliged vpon obedience to haue present recourse vnto his Guardian who shall send him to the Prouinciall, and he receauing him compassionately, shall haue care of him and comfort him, as himselfe in such case would be comforted, and he shall haue no authority to giue other penance to the contrite, but to say only vnto him, depart in peace and sinne no more.

Of the Prouinciall Ministers.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis would, that the Prouinciall Ministers should be equal with the other Religious, and that for their goodnes and vertue, they should be loued of all, in such sort that the simple conceaue no feare nor apprehension to be vnder their gouernement and discipline. He would also that they should be very discrete in their commandementes and compassionate in offences, more ready to receaue iniuries and to pardon then to reuenge, and capitall enemies to vices: but dilligent Curers of the vicious. He would not haue them commaund the Religious in vertue of obedience, in a matter of light consequence, for that were to lay hand presentlie on the sword, or to shew authority to commaund, or to discouer the commaunder to be temerarious. He desired they should be much respected

sted, but withall that their life should be such as might shine before all the Brethren as a mirour of vertue and Religion. The cause why he would they should be loued and honoured was, by reason that they carryed the burden and carre of all the rest and did meritte great recompence at Goddes hand, and great prayse and honour with men when they charitablie preserved and gouerned in the foresaid manner the soules committed vnto their charge,

How the holy Father S. Francis obtayned of God the gift of pouerty, for himselfe and his Order.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis, as he trauiayled came one night to a towne very weary, and his companion also who was Brother Macie: though as Religious living in manner of the Apostles, they had nothing with them to eat, and therefore, they begged it for the loue of God, and gott bread to releiue them: comming afterward to a fountaine that was not far from the towne, they there found a very faire stone, as a table there expresly placed to eat vpon, wheron the holy Father hauing layd the litle bread they had, exceedingly contented in himselfe, sayd: O Brother Macie, wee are not worthy of so great a treasure, and still rayfing his voice he often iterated the same wordes: Wherefore Brother Macie reasoned with him in these wordes: Tell me Father if you please, how call you this extreme pouerty treasure, where there is only bread and water without napkin to eat vpon. The holy Father answered, yea, I call this a very great treasure, where there is not any thinge procured by humane indutrie, but all administred by the diuine prouidence. The bread hath bin giuen vs for the loue of God, the fountaine and stone were created of God for vs: therefore will I beseech him to giue vs grace to loue the treasure of pouertie with all our hart, wherof he is the only administrator and distributor. They also receaued a refectiō more spirituall then corporall, and gaue thanckes to God for it. The next morning proceeding on their iorney S. Francis on the way discoursed verie profoundlie of pouertie, thus saying to his companion: Brother If we well knew the worth of holy pouertie, we should finde it to be so diuine a treasure and of such excellencie, that we are not worthie to possesse it in such base and vnworthie vessels. For this is the vertue, wherbie these terrestriall and transitory thinges are misprised and trodden vnderfoot, that they may serue vs and not we them. This is it that

The praise of pouerty.

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remoueth the impedimentes betweene God and vs, that our soule may vnite it selfe to her Creatour: for it giueth her winges, by which, though she liue on earth, she conuerseth with the Angels in heauen. This is the vertue that accompanied our Lord IESVS CHRIST from his holy conception, euen to the crosse, that arose againe with him, and in fine ascended with him to heauen. On it especially God founded his holy church, not only in the Apostolike estate, but euen in all Christians, who then renounced and sold all they possessed, and brought the price to the feet of the Apostles. There on also, my beloued Brother, hath he founded our Religion. Which lett vs therefore pray him to support on that Euangelicall foundation, and to cause to encrease in an infinite number of vertues, in imitation of his beloued Sonne our Lord and master, and that we may with more ease obtaine the same, lett vs procure to be our intercessors, the glorious Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul, the louers and preachers of holy pouerty, that in our behalfe they make intercessiō to God to graunt vs to be truly poore and his right humble disciples, and graunt this priuiledge to our Order, that there be alwayes therein such as are truly poore, that honour and loue holy pouerty.

How pouerty was graunted to S. Fr. for his Order.

S. Francis with this seruour went to Rome in pilgrimage to visitt the holy Apostles, beginning already to foresee the great persecutions, which many of his Order would lay on pouertie after his death, and that few would aduenture to passe with all. Being then come to Rome, he entered into the Church of S. Peter, and being retired into a chappell, with violent effusion of teares, he demaunded of God that he would please to confirme vnto him the grace and priuiledge of most holy Euangelicall pouertie, for him selfe and his Order, inuocating for intercessors the glorious Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul, who in most glittering splendour appearing vnto him, did embrace and salute him, then said: Brother Francis, because with such deuotion thou demaundest that which God will, and we obserue, and counsaile to be obserued, he hath sent vs vnto thee to aduertise thee in his behalfe, that thou art heard in heauen, and that he hath graunted the treasure of Euangelicall pouertie to thee and to all them that shall follow thee, and that they shalbe of the number of the blessed who shall embrace the same. Which sayd, they disappeared, leauing the holy Father S. Francis exceedingly comforted, and recounting the whole to Brother Macie, they according to their duety together yelded thanckes to God.

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Of the pouerty which the holy Father S. Francis obserued, and would should be obserued att table, and how the Religious were often miraculously provided for in their necessitis.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

SAin^t Francis being in the Oratory of Rieta, a Prouinciall repayed vnto him to celebrate with him the Natiuity of our lord. Wherefore the Religious intending to honour the feast and the Prouinciall, prepared the table with a cloth and white napkins, furnishing it with neat vessel and meat a litle better then ordinary. But the S. coming that morning to eat with them in the refectory; and seeing that preparation, and that the table was rayfed from the ground, where it accustomed to be, he secretly went forth and finding a begger att the gate, he borrowed his hatt and cloake, then taking a companion with him, they went out of the house, and in the meane time the Religious sate downe att table: for he had ordayned that when soeuer he was not found in the Couent att the houre of refection, they should not attend him. About the middes of their meale, the holy Father retourned disguised as aforesaid, and went directly to the refectory, att the dore wherof he demaunded an almose for the loue of God. The Prouinciall answered him: Brother, we are poore as you are, and therefore haue need of these almose: but for the loue of God which thou hast named enter and we will giue thee part of the almose which IESVS CHRIST hath sent vs: S. Francis entred and stood expecting to haue somewhat giuen him. The Prouinciall gaue him his owne dish, with the bread that was in it. The S. receauing it discovered himselfe and sate downe on the ground before the Religious: but being approached to the fire, he sighing said. My beloued Brethren, this table so decently prepared, is not fitt for poore Religious, that ought euerie day to goe aske almes from dore to dore for the loue of God, it would better beseeme you, to follow the example of humilitie of our lord then of any other: for to that end are we called; considering also that we haue promised to obserue it: now doe I esteeme me a Frere Minor, beholding my selfe sitting on the ground. The feastes of God and his sainctes, ought to be honoured with that holy pouerty, wherby they haue purchased heauē, and not with these superfluityes which they did vtterlie abhorre, as thinges that did separate them from the loue of God. It cannot be expressed, how much the poore Religious were amazed, hauing heard and seene this act: for many did weep seeing their Father sitting on the ground with that habitt with so great humility correcting the fault

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He exhorteth
them to
obserue
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which they had committed, wherof accusing them selues, they acknowledged their fault to the S. who blessing them bad them withall euer to keep their table so poore and hūble that the seculars seeing it, might not be scandalized, and that if any begger came, he might be inuited to eat with them. Besides, he would that the bread which they begged should be so limited, that there should remaine none superfluous in the house, but what should only suffice the Religious; assuring them, that if they wanted, God would prouide for them, as by the ensuing miracle doth appeare.

S. Francis
multiplied
bread by
the signe
of the
crosse.

The generall chapter being on time ended, and the Ministers dimissed each one to his Prouince, there remayned with S. Francis 31. Religious, amōg whome was that Brother Monaldo that merited to see the S. as crucified att Arles, as we haue formerly alleadged; they being vpon departure and the S. desiring charitably to eat with thé, there was found only three litle loanes in the house, which S. Francis caused to be brought, made on thé the signe of the crosse, & thé diuided it amongest thé, And God did so multiply it, that it sufficed thé all: & with the fragments was filled a great baskett: by meane of which miracle the Religious retourned exceedingly encouraged in the seruice of God and the loue of pouerty, finding by experience that God was their procurator.

S. Francis
miraculously
obtaind
bread in
a necessity.

On an other time S. Francis comming by night to the Oratory of Sōnino in Lombardy with many Religious, exceedingly oppressed with hunger, they found not in the house one only morcell of bread, for their custome was to demaūd no more of almosse then would suffice them for one day, and if any remayned, they presently distributed it to the poore. The holy Father S. Francis vnderstanding thus much, said to the keeper of the prouision: goe to such a place and you shall finde a baskett full, bring it vnto me. He going thither brought thence a baskett full of bread, which had bin miraculously conueyed thither to releiue the seruantes of God. They all did eat with very great appetite, finding it extraordinarily pleasing: which did not passe without giuing thanckes to the diuine Maiesty for the almes which so liberall a hand bestowed on them. Many other such miracles happened vnto these poore of God, as this that ensueth

How Whiles the Cooke was att his prayers in the Church, the refectiō was miraculously prepared. The 33. chapter of the tenth booke, transferred to this proper place.

Saint Francis admitted to Religion a knight called Bennenuto, who of his great humility, made choice to liue alwayes in the kitchen. It happened on a time that a Burgesse had a will to resect the

the Religious one morning: and to that end sent them betimes what he thought conuenient therto, that they might prepare it att their pleasure, which Brother Bennenuto receaued and lapped all together: then went to masse, where he was so rapt in deuotion, that all the time of seruice he remayned insensible without either memory of the kitchen or any other thing in the world. The conuentuall masse being ended he returned to himselfe, and remembered that the meat was yet to dresse which was sent them, and neuertheles it was the houre of dinner: he therefore went much troubled to the kitchen, and comming neere, he heard manie personnes playing the Cookes, wherat admiring, he opened the dore that was shutt wiouth, wherof he had the key: and entring he saw no person within, but onlie found the said meates readie drest as he had purposed to prepare them: wherupon he gaue thanckes to God, for that he would please by the handes of his Angels, to supply that which he had omitted.

How S. Francis was prayed to tell what was his intention concerning the obseruance of Euangelicall pouerty.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

NOtwithstanding the premises, and by how much the number of Religious encreased, so much neuertheles did the number of true obseruers of Euangelicall pouerty diminish, each one seeking to interpret the rule in such sort as he might not be obliged to this rigorous vow of pouertie: yea there were good Religious that were putt in doubt therof by the subtilities of the infringers, as particularly Brother Ricorio de la Marqueſe, who one time was very instant with saint Francis to be resolved therein praying him to explicate his meaning concerning the obseruance of Euangelicall pouerty, as well past, as present, and to come; that if it pleased God he suruiued him, he might giue testimonie to the Religious his Brethren of his true intention, and withall concerning the bookes which the Preistes might possesse, though they affirmed that their bookes appertained to the Religion and not themselves. The holie Father answered him: Know brother, that such was my first intention and shalbe my last, if all the Religious would beleue me, that none of them possesse any other thinge then one habit, with the cord and linnen breeches, as the rule permitteth. Therefore to them that afterward affirmed that the holie Father S. Francis caused not the same to be obserued in his time, his companions answered that

that among many wordes which the S. vsed to his Religious, and caused to be written according as frō day to day God did dictate vnto him in his prayers and reuelations for the good of the Order, he diuers times said, that he supported many things by reason of the scandall which might happē betweene his Religious & himselfe in the beginning of the Order, and albeit he saw that many waxed cold and relented he tolerated thē, in case that it were not in an essentiall matter of Religion against the vow; because he would not debate with the disobedient: he excused himselfe herein towards God, alleading vnto him, that to the end his word of the augmentation of his seruantes might not proue vaine, he would in himselfe supply for them, wherein they were deficient, which he failed not to doe, as we haue formerlie inserted.

S. Franc.

Would rather that the ornaments of the altare should be sold then the vow of pouerty in necessity

To confirme his intention; I will relate what he one time answered to the Prelate of the Monastery of S. Mary of Angels, that asked him leaue thenceforward to receaue something of the nouices that should enter into Religion, to relieue the necessities of the Couent. The S. answered, that when necessity constrained him, he should sell the ornaments, and rather disfurnish the altare of the virgin Mary, then doe against the strict vow of pouerty, and the obseruance of the rule. because he was certaine that the glorious Virgin would be better pleased, that her terrestriall altare should be disfurnished, then her celestiall Sonne should be disobeyed.

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God promise S. F. to haue care of all the necessities of the Frere Minors that hope in him.

An other time, Many ministers were earnest with him, to permitt his Religious to possesse something, if not in particuler att least in common, wherewith they might supply their necessity, their number being so encreased, that they sometimes endured intollerable inconueniences. S. Francis then felt a great anguish in his soule, and hauing no will to answere thē of himselfe, he fell to his prayer and demanded counsaile of God, who with a cleare and loud voice answered him: Francis I take from the Frere Minors all thinges both in common and particuler, because my selfe alone will haue care to prouide for that familie: lett it multiplie as much as it will, for as long as it relyeth on me, and not on temporall substance, I will nourish it. Sainct Francis gaue this answere incontinentlie to the Ministers, and exhorted them with patience to perseuer in their first holie vocation, considering that by such proceeding they should be eternally comforted of God.

*of the pouerty which saint Francis would that his Religious should shew
in their habittes.*

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

THe holie Father S. Francis would that his Religious should likewise be cloathed with the habitt of pouerty, aswell in the basenes of the stufte, as in the number of coates, that is with cloath of grosse lockes and one only habitt, he detested them that were cloathed with three coates, or with a double garment, he said that the necessity which is not gouerned by reason, but followeth the pleasure and commodities of the body, is a note that the spiritt is dead interiorlie, because, said the S. the spiritt being waxen cold and carelesse of the heat of grace, wherwith one ought to be couered and defended, it is necessary that it make vse of thinges appertayning to flesh & bloud, for in defect of spirituall releife there remaineth to the soule no other remedy then that. He therefore gaue this marcke to discerne true necessity. The soule and the desires do shew signes of necessity, when reason giueth scruple to a man of such necessities. But for that, one must not so soone prouide: for if the Religious hauing necessity should instantly prouide for it, what meritt would remayne vnto him? what exercise of patience could he haue, yea where subiect of meritt is presented vnto him, he by the dilligence he vseth to prouide for himselfe, retourneth vnto Egypt to auoide the sufference of any thing for the loue of IESVS CHRIST which he had att other times promised to endure. He very sharply reprehend them that made difference of coulers, desiring to haue them lighter or sadder and to confound them with his example, he patched his habitt with peeces of the grossest sackcloth, and att the end of his life commaunded, that they should bury him in his habitt couered with sackcloth. If it chaunced some Religious could not support this burden, he rather permitted him, to haue his vnder coate lesse austere then the vpper, in which he would that in all manner, severity and pouerty should appeare. He would sometimes with extreme greife vtter these wordes: A time will come when this obseruance of pouerty, will so relent that it will loose his vigour, and carelesse coldnes will raigne in place therof, because the children of this poore Mother will be ashamed, esteeming it their honour to weare coates of delicat and precious cloath.

In his very time Brother Hely his vicar generall caused to be made an habit of fine cloath with lardge and long sleeues, which S. Francis vnderstanding, he called him in the presence of many Religious, and

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prayed him to lend him the habitt which he woare, which he did: and the Sainct presentlie putt it on vpon his owne, plaiting it exquisite, setting the Capuce, and redoubling the sleeues, which he did with all the vaine gestures which he saw in spiritt that the Religious in such an habitt would vse, then he walked with his head alofte, in setting manner, talking with a graue, strong, and sounding voice, marching in proud gate, now saluting one, now another of his Religious, who were exceedingly astonished, expecting what the Sainct would doe. At length turning to them he said: honorable companie God saue you: which said he putt off the habitt and threw it as farre as he could, being moued with exceeding great seruour of spiritt and zeale of God, then said to Brother Helias, in such sort as each one might heare him: so doe the bastardes of the Order, goe attired: then putting on his humble, short, strict and contemptible habitt, he chaunged countenance, and appeared gracious and mild as before, then began to conuerse with the other Religious humbly according to his custome, teaching them to be humble poore and meeke.

How saint Francis would not that his Religious should haue any thing in proper, and of the pouerty of the houses of the Religious.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

S. Francis made all the Religious of a Couent to depart thence because it was told him that it was the Freer Minors.

AS the holy Father would not that his Religious should possess any thing proper, neither in particuler nor common, much lesse would he it should be said that any thing was belonging to the Religious. He chaunced one time to passe neere to Bolonia, where it being told him, that a monastery was there builded for his Religious: he for hearing that this monastery was his Religiouses, commaunded all them that were in it in vertu of obedience, presently to depart: who in such sort obeyed that one being sick there, caused him selfe to be carryed out: and he would not permitt them to retourne to it till their Protectour, who was then legat at Bolonia, had publicquely preached, that the said house was his and not the Freer Minors. So would he not that they should dwell in any other place, if first it were not assured that the propriety therof had an other master then the Religious.

A Guardian that was a deere freind to S. Francis, founding an Oratorie, made also adioyning vnto it a litle cell for him, builded onlie with hewed wood without other fashion. The Sainct seeing it, said to the Religious: If you will that I vse it, dresse it with oter twigges

ges and bowes of trees, that I may there see my holie pouertie: which being done he there remayned certaine dayes, but hearing one of the Religious one time say, that he came to see his celle, he answered, sith you say it is mine, it shall no longer be so, and thenceforward would no longer continue therein: the like did he in all other places, wherein he the more willingly remayned, as they were poore and meanelly accommodated. To comfort his Religious he would sometimes vse those wordes of IESVS CHRIST in the gospell: The foxes haue holes, and the foules of the aire nestes: but the Sonne of man hath not where to lay his head. And speaking of him, he would say that when he remayned forty dayes and as many nightes in the desert to pray, he had there neither cell nor bell, but was constrained to rest vnder a tree or rocke, and therefore he at least did imitate him in this, that he possessed no cell, that was, or was called his: And if sometimes by misgird he had his Religious to accomodate him some cell, calling himselfe to minde he would no longer remayne therein, thincking of what is said in the gospell. Be not carefull for the morrow. He would haue it putt into his testament that all the celles wherin the Religious dwelt & their house should be made of clay and wood. There was euery yeare a generall chapter held att our ladie of Angels, whither repayred a great number of Religious, who were there very ill accomodated. The citizens of Alsifium considering this great inconuenience, and hauing compasfion to see them all resting in an house couered with thatch, hauing the walles made of osier together with bowes of trees and clay, they resolved to build them a faire great house against the church of the monasterie, expreslie for the generall chapters there yearlie to be held, and so merelie without the knowelge of sainct Francis, they in short time builded it with lime and stone, they knew well that if sainct Francis had knowne therof, he would neuer haue permitted it; which opinion the successe confirmed, for retourning and finding such a building, though he were enformed that the inhabitantes had done it of their owne motion, and that it was to serue onelie for the said chapter, neuertheles, fore-seeing the euell example, which this great house might giue, and that the Religious would build the like otherwhere, in which respect this building was inconuenient in that place, which he would haue to be an example of sanctitie and pouertie to all others, hauing called certaine Religious that were zealous of the Order, before the chapter ended, he with them got vp on the said house and began to vncouer it with intention vtterlie to pull it downe. Which being seene by some kinghtes and gentlemen there placed by the citty in gard to

*S. Francis.
left his
cell because
speaking
to him
one called
it his.
Matt. 8.*

Matt. 6.

*S. Francis.
endeavored
to pul down
a house
which
was
builded
to serue
the Religious
only in time
of the
Generall
chapter.*

scan-

scandales that might happen, they came to the S. and said: Father, hold your handes and know that this house is proper to the citty of Alsisiū we therefore aduertise you to desist from further endommaging the same. Which the holy Father hearing, he answered: it the house be yours I will no further touch it: and calling the said Religious, they descended, and the citizens couered the roote againe, and made choiçe of gentlemen that in time of the chapters should haue care to furnish it as was requisite, that the Religious might be freed of sollicitude, which continued for many yeares.

Of the rule and manner of building which saint Francis prescribed to his Religious.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S.F. residing for the infirmitie of his eyes, nere vnto Sienna, there came a rich gntleman to visit him, who hauing giuen to the Frere Minors a place where to build a monastery, and deuising on the forme of this building, the holy Father said to this man who was verie familer to the Order, Brother, will you know how the houses of our Religious must be builded? you must obserue this order: when my Brethren shall come into any place, where they shall haue no place of retire, and shall finde any one that will permitt them to build on his land, a house, a garden, and other necessities, they must first consider how much land will suffice them, hauing alwayes regard to our pouerty, and to the good example which we are bound to giue in our houses, as well as in other thinges. And therefore, he would not that the Religious should be many together in houses, nor that they should make them great, it seeming to him a difficult matter, that pouerty can be obserued, where there is a great multitude. After they shall haue considered the scituation, and the place conuenient to erect the Monasteries, they must repaire to the bishop of the citty, and say to him: My lord and Father, such a one, for the loue of God, and for the benefit of his soule, permitteth vs to build a house on his land: we first are willing to addresse our selues to you, who are lord and Pastour of all this flocke recommended vnto you and euen of vs, and of all the Religious that shall haue residence here where we desire with the benediction of God and yours, to build a Monastery. And hauing receaued the benediction of the bishop, lett them first of all take a cord, wherwith they shall measure the plott which is necessary for them to build the house, which they shall make poore: the matter shalbe, wood and stone, the celles shalbe litle, onlie sufficient

cient for the Religious to repose therein, who shall also pray there, and strue to auoyd idlenes, their churches shalbe litle, they shall not make them great vnder coulour to preach to the people therein, or for other edification: for it shalbe reputed greater humilicity, and better example, to goe to preach in other churches. When Prelates, Preistes, Religious and other leculers shall come to our Oratory, the poore celles and litle churches will preach to them, and they shalbe much better edified then by faire or good speeches.

An other time he said: The Frere Minors will often build great and sumptuous edifices, bringing to ruine our mistresse pouerty which shalbe cause of euill exaple, murmure and importunity of the people. Therefore it would much better beseeme our estate and the edification of soules, to make no such buildinges: att other times vnder pretence of making chaunge for a more healthfull place, more commodious, and lesse troublesome, they will forsake their poore houses to the great scandall of the people, to erect greater and such as are abhominable to the eyes of God and pouerty, in which buildinges they will employ much almose gotten vnder pretext of necessity, wherof they shall yeld account to God as robbers of the almose of the poore. In these respectes it is much better for them to haue litle churches, in them obseruing their profession, giuing to their neighbour example of true Religious. S. Francis forbad his Religious to build their Monasteries of other matter then wood and earth, as doe the poore of this world. There were certaine Religious of contrary opinion, alleaging diuers reasons, as that in some prouinces wood and bordes were deerer then stones and lime, and also that buildinges made of lime and stone were of longer continuance, and more sure: but S. Francis to auoyd contradiction would giue them no answere, nor did he approue their humane reasons. To demonstrate that he dyed with this intention, he caused these wordes to be inserted in his testament, that the Frere Minors should be very carefull not to accept the houses that are builded for them, if they were not conformable to their holy pouerty: that they should be as for Pilgrimes, and that they should liue in them as strangers. He sometime said against certaine learned Prelates of the Order and wise in erronious worldly prudence, that were alwayes directly contrary in the strict obseruance of pouerty: Wretched be the Religious that are contrary to me in such matters as I know to be the will of God, and are necessary for conseruation of the Order: then he said to his companions: These contradictions redouble mine infirmities, for some Religious are alwayes contrary vnto me, by the authority of their erronious science and prudence, in matters reuealed vnto me by God, for the benefitt of the Order, aswell present as to come, which they misprife, desiring rather to follow their owne opinion, then the will of God.

*What
kind of
churches
the Frere
Minors
should
haue.*

*S. Franc.
foretold
what the
Frere
Minors
haue don
in their
buildin-
ges.*

How much he was ennemy to the vse of superfluous bookes :

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

ANouice had licence of the vicar generall, to haue a psalter, whereby to learne to read, but because he heard it spoaken, that the holy Father S. Francis would not that the simple Religious should haue care either of bookes or learning, he could not contentedly keepe it without approbation of S. Francis, who comming to the place where the Nouice was, who was lately professed, he went to him and said : Father, it would be great satisfaction vnto me, if by your licence I might keepe the psalter, though your vicar generall, hath permitted me, I am not yet well satisfied vnles you confirme it. The holy Father answered him: The Emperour Charlemagne, Rouland, and all the other Pallatine and valiant warriors, with exceeding swetty labours and trauailes prosecuting the infidels, gott of them great victories and purchaced great honour, in the memory of men, the holy martyres gett farre greater glorie, in the battailes and victories, which they obtaine against the infernall spirittes and their fellowes who are wicked men, they dying gloriouslie for the faith of IESVS CHRIST: it seemeth that the men of these times seeke to pourchace glorie and honour, to read or heare related these histories without imitating the, not considering their labours and their death. My childe hereof I would inferre, that thou shouldest seeke neither bookes nor learning, but vertuous worckes, in which consist true glory, because science alone puffeth vp in pride, & charitie edifieth. The Nouice with this answer departed vtterlie confounded. A litle after being tempted by the deuill he mett S. Francis att the fire, to whome he spake againe of the psalter: And the holie Father answered: My Sonne, when thou hast leane for the psalter, thou wilt also ake for the Breuiary, then for other bookes to learne.: and when thou hast learned any thing, thou wilt sitt in a chaire, as if thou were a great dinine or Prelate, and wilt say to one of thy Brethren, Goe fetch me my breuiary. Speaking this with great feruour of spirit, he tooke ashes, wherewith rubbing his head, he sayd: A breuiary for me, a breuiary for me; and diuers times reiterating the same, the Religious remayned as beside him selfe, and durst not for that time speake any more of the psalter. S. Francis said further vnto him: I haue bin att times tempted, as thou art now, to haue many bookes, but to know if such were the will of God, I tooke a booke, where the gospels were written, and besought his diuine Maiessty to voutsafe to shew me his will by the opening thereof, wher-

1. Cor. 8.

*Straung
tempta-
tion of a
Frere
Minor
to haue a
psalter.*

whervpon I lighted on these wordes of his owne: The knowledge of the misteries of the kingdome of God, is giuen to you simple, and to other in paraboles. Manie monthes after that, S. Francis being att our ladie of Angels, the same Religious in extreme temptation, recommended againe vnto him the aforesaid licence to haue a psalter: to whome the holie Father said: goe, doe what the vicar generall hath graunted thee. The Religious retourned whence he came, but the holy Father considering what he had graunted, went after him, and ouertaking him, said my sonne, retourne with me and show me the place where I bid thee doe with the psalter what the vicar generall had permitted thee. Comming thither, S. Francis fell on his knees before the said Religious, saying: Brother I confesse my fault, I confesse my fault, then added: know that he who wilbe a good Frere Minor must haue nothing but his habitt, the corde, and linnen breeches as the rule enioyneth, and they that are by manifest necessitie constraigned, sockes: euery thing els is superfluous, and against the puritie and pouertie of the rule, which we promise God to obserue: the said Religious moued with the wordes, beleueed this holy counsaile,

Being by diuers demanded the like counsaile, he answered them with this sentence, right worthy to be sett in letters of gold, and not onely painted or engrauen in marble, but in the hartes of men: A man hath so much knowledge, as he is a man of vertue and loueth God and his neighbour, and no more: and the Religious so good, as he doeth good worckes; because the tree is knowne by his fruit. When he retourned from Syria, a Prouinciall came to visit him to cōferre with him of the affaires, of the Order, & particularly touching the vow of pouerty: to know his will therein, and of the obligatiō inserted in the first rule, take out of the gospel: to witt, whē you trauaile, you shall carry with you neither mony nor wallett: S. Fran. answered, I meane thus, that the Frere Minors must onely haue their habitt, the cord, & linnen breches, as the rule saith, and such as are enforced by necessity, the sockes. The Prouinciall answered: What shall I doe with so many bookes as I haue, that are worth more then fortie crownes? which he said, because he desired to haue licence of S. Francis to enioy them, for he kept them with a remorse of conscience. The S. replied, Brother, In either will, nor ought nor can doe any thing against my conscience, and the profession of the holy gospel which we haue promised. Which this Prouinciall vnderstanding he was exceedingly troubled: & the S. perceiving him so sorrowfull, with a great seruour of spirit said vnto him, as if he had spoake to all the Religious: you would seeme to me to be Frere Minors, & would be called Preachers of the gospel, & make shew to obserue it: but in effect, you desire

Matt. 13.

Apotheg-
ma of S.
Francis.
Matt. 7.

Luc. 10.

to haue propriety and superfluity, and to haue a purse. The Ministers earnestly seeke to take away the first rule (you shall not carry wallettes in your trauaile) they supposing that they should so be freed from the obligation of this counsaile of Euangelicall perfection: but the holy Father S. Francis in the presence of many brethren, said: the Ministers thincke to deceaue God and me, but the deceipt falleth on them selues. Lett them and all my other Religious know, that they are obliged to the obseruance of Euangelicall perfection: and will that it be thus written in the beginning and end of the rule. That the Brethren are firme-ly obliged to the obseruance of the holy gospell of our lord IESVS CHRIST.

Of the horrible malediction which S. Francis gaue to a prouinciall, and wherefore: and of the miracle that ensued.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

BRother Iohn Estitia a very learned Minister of the Prouince of Bologna, ordayned an exercise of study in the Monastery of Bologna, without licence of the holy Father S. Francis, who vnderstanding therof, went incontinently thither, and very sharply reprehended him by thele wordes: I rather desire that one obey the holy gospell, and be employed in the study of holy prayer, where the holy Ghost is Master, then in humane studies, and curious lessons, wherin is lost the spiritt of humility and the sweetnes of God, the ladder wherof is this Religion, which annihilateth this new study. But S. Francis being departed, this Prouinciall began againe as before, wherat the holy Father being for the zeale of God much disquieted, he publikelie gaue him his malediction as to a disobedient child. By which the said Brother Iohn fell incontinently very sicke, and lying in his bedde, perceiving that his sicknes did hourly encrease, feared and touched, rather with the feare he had of death, then with true contrition: he sent two Religious to pray S. Francis to reuoke the said malediction: to whome the S. answered: God hath confirmed in heauen the maledictiō which I haue giuen him, so that he is cursed of God. In that instant, there fell from heauen a litle stone of burning brimstone, which transpearced both his body and bed, and att the very houre he died, yelding an extreme infection: by this so seuerē chasticement God shewed how iust and assured was, the counsaile of the S. that they should not be curious of bookes, but should rather study to ground themselves in holy humility, prayers, and pouerty.

The holy Father being once demaunded if he would consent that the

lear-

S. Fr. did not desire that his Religious should. Therefore he cursed a Prouinciall because he had established a study against his Will.

learned who were and might enter into religion, should study diuinity, hee answered affirmatiuelie, provided that they imitate the example of IESVS CHRST, who prayed more then he read, as is written also of his disciples, and also that they omitte not the studie of prayer to gett learning: and that they studie not onlie how they ought to speake, but principallie how they may effect what they read, and doeing so may teach others to doe good worckes. I will that my Religious be disciples of the gospell, and that so they make progresse in the knowledge of the truth, and doe also encrease in puritie & simplicity, that from the prudence of the serpent they doe not separate the simplicity of the doue, which IESVS CHRIST with his mouth hath vni-
 ted together. The holie Father affirmed that by meane of the knowledge of ones selfe, one easly obtayneth the knowledge of God, provided that one sought it with humilitie and without presumption. Therefore he was much troubled when he knew that neglecting vertue and the vocation wherto the Religious was called of God, one sought knowledge by curiositie, with extreme dolour of his soule, saying: My Religious that are honoured by the curiosity of knowledge, are found emptie handed, in the times of tribulation. I would rather exercise them in the vertue of humilitie, that the perillous times of temptations happening, they might finde God with them in those anguishes: for afflictions will come, against which, neither their bookes nor purchased science will auaille, then would it be more expedient for them to be simple and seruent in obedience, humilitie, and charitie, then great in commaunding and teaching, in curiositie of science. Heareadie foresaw that knowledge puffed vp with vanitie in future time would giue a great fall to the Order, because curiositie of the said knowledge would induce manie to great arrogance, which would destroy obedience, humilitie, pouertie, with all true Religion; bringing in libertie and priuiledges: The said holie Father said: there shall be so manie that will labour to gett knowledge, that hee shalbe happie who for the loue IESVS CHRIST shall shunne the same. He appeared after his death to one of his companions who was exceedingly busied in the studie of preaching, and reprehended him sharply, forbidding him that ouer great anxietie of spirit which he had towards study, and commaunded him to study to walke the path of holie humilitie and pouerty.

Howe he would that his Religious should study.

Matt. 10.

Very remarkable sentences of S. Franc.

How he discovered and prevented the deceit of the learned, and curious of his Order.

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

IT will succed (said S. Francis) to these curious of knowledge and learning, that esteeming to be more edified and enflamed in deuotion towards God, by knowledge of him, if they vse it not with great humility, they, by the same science, and by the great study therein employed, will remayne void of all goodnes, cold in charity, and puffed with vaine glory, reioycing in their vanity, and obstinate in opinion: wherefore the holy Ghost being vnable to dwell in bodies subiect to sinne, he wilbe constrained vterly to forsake them. Certaine Religious therfore one day relating vnto him that a great diuine was entred into their Religion att Paris, and that by his doctrine, he much edified the people and cleargie, and was a great honour to the Order: S. Francis sighingly answered them, I much feare that his like will one day destroy, whatsoeuer God by me his vnworthy seruant hath planted in this vineyard, I would haue no greater Doctours in diuinity, then they who teach their neighbour, by worckes, meekenes, pouerty, and humility, because the goodnes of a Religious is according to his obedience to the rule, and his doing what he knoweth. Those preachers that trust only in their doctrine, when thy see concurrence of people, and that they are desirously heard, and some by their preaching are conuerted to penance, thy are puffed with vaine glory for the worckes of an other, as if they were their owne, and so preach saluation to others, but damnation to themselves: therfore thy glory of that wherof they haue no more cause then, a trumpett which soundeth by the mouth of an other man that windeth it: for what are they but trumpettes, wherby God sendeth his sound, be they good or euill, so that the cause of the conuersion of the hearers, ought not to be attributed to them, but to the very force of holy doctrine, and to the teares of the simple, though the same be not by them vnderstood: these simple ones are my knightes of the round table, who hide them selues in desertes and sequestred places the more commodiously to apply them to prayer and meditation, lamenting theirs and others sinnes; therfore God alone knoweth the fruit they produce, and how many soules by their merittes are saued, wherefore they shall heare this his voice: Come thou faithfull and prudent seruant, because thou hast bin faithfull vnto me in few things, I will place there ouer many, enter into the kingdome of eternall life: but they who haue had no other cogitation but to learne

kno-

*Exhortations
for the
preaching
Frere
Minors.*

knowledge; and to demonstrate their doctrine vnto others, preaching without edifying by good worckes, shalbe poore & empty of all good, before the throne of the terrible iudge, they shall haue their vessels full of shame and confusion, and they shall also heare God say vnto them: you haue preached only by the wordes of your purchased science, but I haue saued soules, by vertue of the merittes of my simple ones, you therefore shall remaine with the winde of pride which you haue sought, and these shall receaue the recompence of the labour of their humility and prayer, which is our vocation, wherto these puffed ones shall haue bin contrary, with the winde of their knowledge persuaading many to relinquiish this truth, yea persecuting, as blinded and frantike, such as walke by this truth, but the error and false opinion, wherein in they haue liued, which they haue preached, and wherby they haue conducted many with the in the profound goulfe of ignorance, and spirituall blindness, shall tourne to their greife and confusion, and they shalbe buried in darcknes, for it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, of this world, and the prudence of the prudent I will reiect. So the holy Father as far forth as his power extended, for his office in this world, permitted not any of his Religious to be called Master, though formerly in the world he had bin such, alleadging vnto them the wordes of our lord IESVS CHRIST, One is your Master in heauen, and therefore lett none be called master on earth. He affirmed of himselfe, that though he had bin very learned, he would neuer haue endured to be called Doctor or master because it was to doe against IESVS CHRIST: so that he concluded that it was much more profitable to a man to knowlitle, and be humble, then to performe great matters with much knowledge, and presumption of himselfe.

1. Cor. 1.

Matt. 23:

How much S. Francis reioyced att the good example which his order gaue to the church, and how much displeased, when his Religious procured or caused any scandall.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

THis glorious Father said, that the Frere Minors were sent of God in this latter age to be an example of light to them that were entangled in the obscurities of sinne. Therefore if he heard relation of any example of edification, that the Religious gaue to the holy Church, he with great seruour would say. The house of God shalbe filled with good & sweet fauours, which shalbe produced by the precious oyntment of vertues. He exceedingly reioyced att the good reputation of his deere childre & at the exaple of piety which they gaue, because by meane therof they couerted sinners, to the loue & seruice of IESVS CHRIST, a thing especially

especially desired of him, and to such he gaue his holy benediction, And consequently because his Religious knew that their holy Father would haue them exercised in this vertue, and zeale of the saluation of soules, they so much the more endeaoured to giue him satisfactiō therein. And if it happened that any one procured the least trouble to his neighbour, he presently asked him pardon, with great humility and offered to doe pennance for the same.

*The humi-
lity of
the first
Frere
Minors.*

*Marcke-
able sa-
tisfactiō.*

It chaunced one time that an ancient Religious of the Order, in presence of a gentleman, vttered some wordes in choler to one of his Brethren; but perceauing that he had troubled his Brother and disedified the other, acknowledging his fault, and impatient against himselfe, he incontinently tooke the dong of an asse, and putt it into his mouth: and forced himselfe to chew it, saying, tongue eat this dong sith thou hast presumed to arise against thy neighbour and in his face to spert the venime of thy choller. Which the said gentleman seeing, was exceedingly edified, and deuoted to the whole Order, presenting himselfe entirely to the seruice of it.

*How
much
S.F. was
troubled
to heare
that his
Religious
gaue
scandall.*

The holy Father S. Francis was contrarily extremely afflicted when he vnderstood that any one had disedified his neighbour. To this purpose it being related vnto him that a bishop had reprehended one of his Religious, for hauing seene him doe something sauouring of hypocrisie, as to procure the growing of his beard and other thinges vn-beseeming a Frere Minor, he stood vp right, and ioyning his handes, he weeping said: Lord I E S V S C H R I S T, who hauing chosen twelue Apostles, one of them proued a traytor and was therefore damned, and the residue ouer all the world preached thy holie faith, by wordes and by pious and vertuous workes: and now in this latter houre being mindefull of thy mercie, it hath pleased thee to plant the Religion of Frere Minors for helpe vnto they church, and for seruice of they holie faith and thy holie gospell, haue care thereof I beseech thee for thy pietie: for if this Religion giue scandale in steed of good example, who shall satisfie thee for her? Thus vrged by zeale of the honour of God and the saluation of soules, stretching his armes a broad, with great effusion of teares he vttered these wordes: Good God and Father, I beseech thee lett all the Religious, who by their euill example and impious workes shall destroy that which by meane of thy true Frere Minors thou hast edified, be accursed of thee, of thy celestiall court, and of me thy humble seruant. Vpon a day reprehending a Religious that had giuen ill example, among other thinges he said this: Brother will you that I lett you know the displeasure which the Religious procure me that scandalize others? the same that one should doe, who hauing a rapier in his hand should often thrust

*Terrible
imprecation
of
S. Franc.
against
the scandalous.*

thrust me into the flankes, and therewith I could not dye, so the nough-ty Religious doe augment in my soule greifes vpon greifes, giuing euill example and doebucher my bowels: then he added: Ah my God! if one wounded could fly him that threatneth his death, would he not fly? and why then doe not I fly into the Mountaines and desertes, to auoid the hearing of such and the like matters of my Religious?

Of an answere which God gaue to the holy Father S. Francis in prayer, being exceedingly afflicted for some scandales committed.

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

THe afflicted S. Francis knowing that certaine Prouincialls of his Order gaue not good edification to the simple Religious, foreseeing that therby many other in short time might swarue from the obseruance of the rule, moued with great greife which afflicted him for the zeale of the honour of God, often reiterating these wordes: My God I recommend vnto thee this familie, which thou hast giuen me, he heard a voice that said: Why troublest thou thy selfe poore man? Why doest thou so much afflict thee? if some Religious walke not my way, and giue ill example, esteemest thou that I haue so chosen thee for Pastour of this Religion, as that I continue not the principal Pastour thereof? Who hath planted this Religion of Freere Minors? who couerteth men to pennance? who giueth them force and vertue to perseuer in it? Tell me doe not I al this? yea I haue chosen thee expresly without learning or eloquence, yea simple: that performing what lyeth in thee, thou committ the rest to me, and that this new conuersion of so great part of the world be not attributed to thy doctrine, nor to any humane industry: but to my grace alone. Now to the end thatt thou and all the world know, that I will watch ouer my flock; I haue placed thee there, as a blanck and paterne to all the Religious, that by what thou shall doe, they may see whervnto they are obliged, and I will perseue and maintaine them: And if it happen that some doe fall, others shall rise. They that walke in my way, are mine and shall retourne to me, they that walke not in it, shall loose the litle good which they seeme to haue. Therefore I commaund thee not so much to vexe thy selfe henceforward, but onlie perseue in thy course, and know that I haue planted and conserue this Religion which I so much affect, that if one of the Brethren retourne to his vommitt, I will referre his crowne to an other in his place, and if he be not borne, I will cause him to be borne. And that thou mayest

know how much I loue the Religion of thy Freres, though in the Order there remayne but three, I will not abandon them, but those three shalbe my Religion. The poore Father was comforted with these wordes, and so supported all with more patience. In the Chapters he would often vse these wordes to his Religious: I haue made vow and professiō of the rule of Frere Minors, and all the Brethren are in like sort obliged therunto. I haue left the office of Gouvernour of the Religious, by reason of mine infirmities, and withall because it was permitted by his diuine maiesty for the good of my soule; I know the greatest furtherance that I can giue to my Religion, is continually to pray for it, and to beseech God to gouerne it. I am not obliged to any other thing then to giue to each one good example. And if any perish by my euill example, I wilbe obliged to yeld account for him vnto God: Therefore they that hold the same rule with me, and know very well if they will, what they ought to doe, (for they see it practised both by me and others) if they doe not their duety they worck their owne damnation: God will chastise them, I shall not be obliged for them in that respect; wherein I referre my selfe to God.

*The answer
were of
S. Franc.
to his
Religious
that de-
sired to
haue ge-
nerall
auctority
to preach*

Certaine Religious one time said to S. Francis with a good zeale thincking therby to meritt much: Father, doe not you know that Prelates sometimes refuse to giue vs leaue to preach, by reason wherof we spend much time idlye: we therefore thincke it conuenient that you shall doe great seruice to God and much good to soules, if you procure generall licence of the Pope to preach freely with priuiledge. The holy Father exceedingly reprehended them, foreseeing the scādall that therby might easily arriue betweene the Clergie and his Order, and said vnto the: you Frere Minors, will not know the will of God, nor will permitt me to conuert the world, in such sort as God will I should conuert it. Therefore I tell you, you ought to obtaine this licence of the Prelates themselues with your humility & the good example of your life, which tōtinuyng in you, the Prelates will pray you to preach in their diocesses & churches and to conuert their people to pennance. After this māner they will more willingly call you to preach the your priuiledges will doe, which will only pusse you vp in pride: and if you beleue mine aduise, you shall endeavour to keep you from pride, from the vices of auarice, of enuy and vaine desires so detrimentall to your soules (and by your example) to your neighbours also: you shall in your sermons exhort the people to pay their tythes to the Preistes, of whome so. doeing you shalbe entreated to preach and heare their confessions, though you should not so much respect that, as to conuert them: for a man conuerted will soone finde a confessour, as for me, I demaund no other priuiledge of God, but to loue and reuerence each one, and to conuert the most sinners

ners that I can, by obedience to God and his holy church, and the same more by humilitie and example of the obseruance of our rule, then by wordes.

Of the afflictions incident vnto the Order, reuealed vnto the holy Father S. Francis.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis being one time in prayer att our Lady of Angels, most instantlie praying his diuine maiesty that he would please to shew mercy to the Christiā people, on whom he had reuealed vnto him that he would lay a great scourge: God answered him: Francis if thou wilt that I haue compassion of my people, procure dilligentlie that thy Order perseuer in such sort as it is instituted, that therein may be found such as may worthelie make intercessiō for them: and in fauour of thy Order and of thee, I promise thee, not to lett fall on my church that great affliction which aymeth att it & threateneth it. But I will haue thee know that if thy Order doe preuaricate, the first punishmentes which I shall inflict on my church shalbe on the preachers therof, and will giue to the deuill what authority ouer them he will. Thence will grow so manie scandales betweene them and the world, that none will aduenture to take the habitt, but in the desertes where I will preserue this few number of elect, as I preserued the children of Israel so manie yeares: and so the good being conserued in my grace, the Order shall afterward be reduced to his pristine estate. Herevpon did S. Francis prophesie; that a verie violent temptation should be raised in his Religion by pourchased science, wherwith in manner of a furious winde from the region of the desert, as the affliction of Job furiously striking the four corners of the house of his Religion, his owne children would bring it to ruine: because, said he, being puffed vp by their learning and relying thereon, they well lay ambushes and cast snares for the true and lawfull children, framed by that huge damned woman called pride, to whome they will sacrifice their child birthes, that is, their worckes: and will liue in the delightes of the profit of them, and of the recompence of their impudencie and arrogancie. Now the auctoritie of such Religious wilbe extremelie bitter and insupportable to the iuste, that shalbe persecuted by them: because their simplicitie, obedience, pouertie and zeale of the honour of God, shall in a manner inexplicable, secretlie confound them. Wherefore they by reason of their pride being vnable to endure it, relying on the wisdom and reputation

*Prophe-
sies of
Francis.*

of their valure, and the authority of the nobility and Princes of the world, purchased by means of ambition, will persecute them to death. There is also found a prophesie of the holy Father S. Francis, written by the hand of Brother Leo, of the great schisme and diuision that was in the Church after the election of Pope Vrban the sixt, the yeare 1378. that continued neere 40. yeares, the tenour wherof was thus.

A time will come when the holy Church shalbe full of schismes, which will put men in extreme perplexitie, as well in the spirituall, as temporall estate, and the deuill shall haue manie followers and shalbe more dilligente then ordinary, to take aduantage by this occasion to augment his kingdom: then shall the beauty of this Order be defiled with that of others, and prophane apostasie shalbe accomplished, to the dissention of two Realmes, when few shall obey the holie Church with a true charitie, and he that shall not be canonicallie elected to the Papacie, yea suspected of heresie, shall be obeyed: because manie shalbe subtiltie peruered by him, by his contagious errors, then shal scandales multiplie, and Christianitie be diuided, manie refusing to contradict the same, the scismes and diuisions of the Clergie, of Religious and of the people shalbe so violent, that if those dayes were not abbreviated by God, the elect if it were possible would fall into the same errors, if God of his mercie should not deliuer them. S. Francis in regard of this reuelation particularlie put into his rule the vow of obedience vnto the Pope, vnto his successours canonicallie elected, and to the holie Romane church, in the beginning and end of the same rule, knowing how much it would profitt his order, in that so turbulent time to perseuer firme: therfore he gaue this instruction to his, that foreseeing the same, they might know to gouerne themselves well therein.

Of the liberty wherinto the Order should fall, prophesied by S. Francis.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

THe holie Father S. Francis being one day in presence of the Cardinall Vgolino. Protector of the Order, and of manie other of his Religious, he vttered these wordes, which he afterward also preached to the Brethren: a time will come, when the Religious of my Order by the malice of the deuill, shall leaue the way of holie simplicitie and pouerty, indifferentlie receauing all sort of mony, and all such legacies as by testament shalbe bequeathed them; and leauing solitarie and humble places, will build faire and sumptuous houles in citties and townes, capable to entertayne Princes and Emperours:

perours: then by fauour they will procure obtaine priuiledges of the Popes through art and humane prudence, and by their earnest importunitie they will obtaine requestes merelie iniust, though cloaked with truth, by this meane they will not onlie abandon their rule instituted by IESVS CHRIST, against their solemne profession: but will also ruine and alter the puritie therof, chaunging the good intention into peruerse, and being armed by meane of the said priuiledges, against obedience, against other Religious, and against all the Clergie, when they shall expect to gett the victory, the wretches shall finde themselves fallen into the trench which themselves shall haue made, gathering no other fruit of their seminary, but scandales which they shall offer to God in steed of the saluation of soules: who seeing the same shall be no more thenceforward their Pastour, but their ruiner according to their meritt: And therefore he will leaue them entangled in the nettes of auarice and their vaine desires. Which being naturallie considered of many, shall cause that acknowledging this punishment of the hand of God, they repent their faultes, and retourne to their former estate, notwithstanding that they be persecuted and derided of others, as are all the vertuous and true seruantes of God by the wicked and impious. But as the same temptations shall accomplish the ruine of these, so the temptations of the wicked and the afflictions of the perfidious, which the elect shall support patientlie for the loue of IESVS CHRIST shall be to them so manie crownes of glory.

Of a merueillous statua that appeared to S. Francis and the exposition therof.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

THis glorious Father being one time in prayer at S. Marie of Dan. 3. Angels, there appeared before his eyes a statua of merueillous greatnes and beautie, resembling that of Nabuchodonosor, as the holy scripture describeth: for it had the head of gold, with a most beautifull face, the breast and armes of siluer, the bellie and thyghes of metall, the legges of iron, and the feet partlie of iron, and partlie of earth and clay; it was couered with a cloake made of course and grosse sackcloth, wherof it seemed to be ashamed and exceedingly disquieted; which did much amaze the saint; but the Angel that represented this vision thus spake vnto him: Francis, wherat art thou amazed? know that God hath sent thee this vision full of mysterie: that seeing it, thou mayest know the mutation which wilbe in thy Religion in future time: and therefore hearken; the head of gold which thou seest so faire, signifieth

*The first
estate
compa-
red to a
head of
Gold.*

*The se-
cond to
the brest
and ar-
mes of
siluer.*

*The third
the belly
of metal.*

seth the beginning of thy Religion builded in the constancie of Euan-
gelicall perfection. Therefore as gold is of greater value then any other
mettall, and the situation of the head is much more eminent in the
body then any other member, so the beginning of thy Order, is more
precious, in regard of fraternall, and golden charity and Angelicall ver-
tue: and is of such beauty and nobilitie, for the obseruance of Euan-
gelicall pouertie, that it shall fill all the world with admiration. And
the queene of Saba, that is the holy church with all her faithfull shall
admire it and feele in their hartes an incomprehensible ioy, beholding
so beautifull a mirour of sanctity and spirituall wisdome, and all the
first, builded on this first rock, shalbe glorified by his diuine maiesty.
Because they shall endeauour to imitate I E S V S C H R I S T, and
his holy vertues. The brest and armes of siluer represent the second
estate of thine Order: so much inferiour to the first as siluer is more ba-
se then gold: But as siluer is of value in regard of the faire colour and
worthy sound: so this second estate of the Order shall haue many
Religious Gentlemen of discent, famous for learning, and renowned
for their preachings, who shalbe so honoured in the Church, that
manie of them shall gett the cheifest dignities therin, as Abbeyes, Bis-
hoppricks, Cardinalships, yea euen the Papacie: and because the force
of a man consisteth principally in the armes and brest, God will then
fournish thine Order, with men of such valure, and of so good conscience,
as shall defend it from the potent ennemies that shall then persecute it,
they shall likewise helpe to support the holy church, against the impe-
tuous fury of heretikes and schismatikes that the shall take armes against
it. After this, shall come the third estate figured by the belly of brasse,
which is without comparison more base then the second. But as the
greatest quantity of monny is made of this mettall: so in that time the
number of such as shall esteeme their belly their God, shalbe exceed-
ding great. But in their greatest glory, they shalbe yet confounded:
for they shall only know the thinges appertayning to the earth. And
though they be followed of many for their learning and eloquence,
which they shall display in the pulpitt, for which they shalbe extolled
of many people that consider only the exterior barcke, neuertheles
spirituall men shall lide esteeme therof: for they shall perceauce them
to affect sensualitie, not the honour of God and the saluation of
soules. Alas, they shalbe reputed of God in the same degree, as
the Apostle S. Paul mentioneth: that preachers without charitie
are like to metall or belles that haue good sound, but it nothing pro-
fiteth them: for according as they shall preach holy and spirituall wor-
des, they shall bring forth spirituall children, and shall manifest
to others the fountaine of life, but themselues shall remaine wi-
thered

thered in the desert land. The fourth estate shalbe sterill and terrible. *The*
 signified by the legges of iron, foras iron doth mollifie brasse, siluer, *fourth*
 and gold, so this estate shalbe of such malice and obstinacie, in his *in the*
 owne opinion, that by negligence and vnaccustomed conditions, they *leggs of*
 shall forgett the good which they had built, that is the golden cha-
 rite of the first founders of the Order, the siluer verity of the second, &
 the preaching and voice of the third in the church of God. And ther-
 fore as the feet support all the body, so they by the force of iron, and
 by a terrestriall hipocrisie, shall sustaine the body of the Order, and
 shall couer themselues in their course cloake, and endeaour to make
 the world beleue in exterior apparence, that they yet liue in their
 former pouertie and humilitie. These interiourlie shalbe rauening
 woulfes and to God knowne for such, though to men concealed, be
 it that they endure afflictions by diuers tribulations as iron in the fire, *Sap. 6.*
 not only by the hammers of the deuils, but euen by Princes of the
 world: for as the scripture saith: the great for their malices shall
 also support great tormentes: they neuertheles shalbe so hard and
 stronge, that as the iron resisteth all other mettals, so shall they
 resist all, aswell Prelates as seculer princes, with a will to ouercome
 all, and subdue euery thing by their hardnes compared to iron: ther-
 fore shall they be in disgrace with God, as hard-necked men. But as
 his feet are not of pure iron, but of clay also, that signifieth hipocrisie,
 they shal employ themselues in affaires and negotiations of the world,
 to please and intrude themselues into the fauour of seculer persons:
 notwithstanding because of the great contrariety that is betweene ba-
 ked clay, and iron, in such sort as it is impoissible to vnite them together,
 there will arise such a contrariety among the Religious of that latter
 time, that at length hauing litle resisted and their forces being weakene-
 ned, they shall begin to vse the art of hipocrisie, being impoissible to
 ioyne true pride with fayned pietie, att least any long time, they being
 att length discovered to be misprisers of the discipline of the Order, and
 consequently of the gospell of I E S V S C H R I S T, first they
 shalbe diuided one from an other, as baked clay is separated from iron,
 though they seeme to be vnited together: and therefore hatreds, dis-
 sentions, partialities and tyrannies shall begin to raigne among them,
 and afterwarde the world perceauing such impieties and wicked-
 nes, they shalbe examined and chasticed euen by the seculers, and
 this shall befall them because they shalbe loosed from their head of the
 first charitie. And therefore they shalbe happy, who shalbe mindefull of
 the commaundements of God and of their Order: for they shalbe refined
 as gold in the fire, and though they be not knowne in the world, they
 shall neuertheles be much esteemed of God, for he will neuer abandon
 this

this Religion so that there shall alwayes remayne some competent number of vertuous: though in comparilon of so many lewd and libertines, they shall appeare very few: and this few shall be persecuted of the world, which shall procure them a greater crowne with God. Now the sackcloth and cloake so course, wherof I seeme to be ashamed, and disquieted, is holy pouerty, which as it is the ornament of this Order, and the singuler foundation of all piety, so the bastard children shalbe ashamed therof, for their ayme shall not be to God, but to the world, and therefore, endeauouring to please it, they shall misprize the habitt of God, and seeke faire and fine cloth, for the vse wherof they shall importune the world, and shall pourchace it by way of simonie; and therefore happy shall they be that perseuer to the end in obseruance of their holy vowes: After these speeches it disappeared, and the holy Father S. Francis, remayned full of admiration and teares, with all his hart recommending vnto God his sheep, both present and to come.

God reuealed these thinges and many other to his seruant Francis, as head and Pastour of his Frere Minors, concerning the chaunge of his Religion, which being founded in Euangelicall perfection, exceeding difficult to be obserued according to the world, it is not to be admired, if it be fallen, and doe decline from its perfection; We all being naturally inclined and affected to worldly thinges, and to shunne all seueritie and rigour, and all necessitie, and much more freindes to our owne will, then to the will of God, which according to our sottish prudence, causeth vs to make no esteeme of the commaundementes of God, and to forke his most strict way, though most necessarie to our saluation, as in deed it is: and therefore degenerating more and more we fall from our first Fathers. On the other side also it is not to be admired if some of these so fraile vessels composed of earth as we are, haue demonstrated such an inuincible constancie, in so strict an obligation to obserue the gospell; and in themselues to preferue such a treasure; because all that is the worck of God, to the end the world may know that the eminencie and glory of this Religion, proceedeth of the vertue and power of his diuine maiesty, and not of humane force and vertue: And therefore when to him seemeth time conuenient, he sendeth reformatiōs to support the same.

of

*Of the compassion and discret charity of S. Francis towards all his Religious,
but particularly towards the sicke.*

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

BEcause the obligation of a Prelate towards his sheep, doth not only extend to giue them aduise and spirituall refections, but also to releiue them in their corporall necessities, the holie Father S. Francis was replenished with an infinite charitie, and had a continuall care to prouide for the corporall wantes of his beloued children, and particularlie where sicknes and necessitie were ioyned together, which charitie he exercised, not only of Fatherlie duetie, but of naturall compassion, which he euer had towards the afflicted: which vertue he afterward redoubled to make it more meritorious: so that he referred all the afflictions of his neighbour, to the person of IESVS CHRIST, for whose loue they ought to be afflicted, and therefore, his hart melted, as if he had seen his God in them: for which cause, those new and feruent warriers of IESVS CHRIST in the beginning of the Order, did so speciallie exceed in leading seuerer liues, and doeing worckes worthy of penance, which may appeare by the ensuying example, together with the charitie of the Saint.

As the Religious were one day a sleep, one of them began with a loud voice to cry: I dye: att which lamentation S. Francis instantlie arose, and caused all the other Brethren to arise, and to light a candell, then asking who was he that complained, the Religious answered him: Father it is I, that dye with hunger: which hearing he presentlie caused to be brought him to eat: and that he should not be ashamed, he caused a table to be prepared, wheron he meant to eat himselfe; which he caused all the other Religious to doe though it were a verie extraordinarie houre. The Religious hauing taken his Refection, the holie Father, to teach his children the vertue of discretion, wherby they should moderate the seruour of the spiritt, for conseruation of the corporall forces in abstinence, he said. Brethren, learne and retaine in you this aduertisement; that each one carefullie conserue his naturall complexion and forces, and lett him vse moderation in abstinence, accordinge vnto them: for albeit some can sustaine themselues with litle food, it is not therefore reasonable that others who cannot liue with so litle, should keep the same abstinence: for as we are obliged to forbear superfluous eating, for not damning our soule and consuming our body: so ought we to shunne indiscreet abstinence, but must so vse it as the bodie may

*S. Franc.
did once
eat in
the night
with all
his Religious
to accompany
a Brother that
hunger
oppressed
to death.*

R^e

serue

serue the soule: for God loueth mercy aboue sacrifice, and lett euerie one remember what by charity I haue done, I haue only done it as a pious worcke, and for an example of charitie, his extreme necessitie requiring it. And therefore lett each one refraine to cause the like an other time, and especially Prelates towards their Religious. Which was exceeding carefully obserued of the S. for though he were very glad that pouerty in all thinges, should appeare in them, yet would he neuer that his Religious should be frustrate of their due releife, and therefore when he saw they had not sufficient to eat, himselfe would goe to begge, as we haue heretofore made appeare.

For his owne respect, notwithstanding his verie feeble complexion, he was euer very strict and abstinent, yea beyond reason, euen from the beginning of his conuersion to his death. Yet he is not therefore to be reprehended, considering that one ought not to measure or limitt the life of the great seruantes of God, who are continuallie directed in their actions by the holy Ghost, but we must permitt to worck in them, the spiritt and certaine excesses that are to be seene: it is sufficient for vs. to our confusion to admire them, and therof to imitate what one can, for it was expedient, that, as many were defectiue, performing lesse then their duety, God should raise others: that in their bodyes should supply both for themselves and their neighbours: and to the end that the holy Father might giue this good example of himselfe, wheras in his sicknesses many thinges extraordinarie were necessarie for him, he would rather depriue himselfe therof, to giue example to others: and when there were any Religious sicke, he was not ashamed to goe into the villages to seeke flesh, and their other wantes, which in their health he would not haue permitted them to vse for any thing in the world. He did also seriouslie admonish them to remember that they must be Frere Minors, not only in their health, but euen in their sickenes, and that therefore they should not haue an insatiable spiritt, nor admitt all the commodities that the delicate of the world enioy, for so there would be no difference, nor should they meritt before God, for whose loue they ought to be content to endure some inconueniences, yea euen in their sicknesses. Now though this holy Pastour did zealously vtter these wordes: yet such was his charity that seeing them sicke he could not but releiue them, and seek to supply their necessities, and cherish them to his power, as by this example may appeare. One of the most ancient Religious of the Order being sicke, the S. moued with cōpasion to see him so afflicted, said to himselfe: if this Religious had eate grapes, he would be better: then calling the Religious, he conducted him into a vineyard, neere vnto the Couent: whither being come, that the Religious might not be ashamed, he began first

first to eat grapes, then gaue to him, and made him sit downe, and so entertayned him that he arose as sound as he had euer bin, the vertue of God working by the charitie of his seruant: which the said Religious diuers times with teares recounted to his brethren.

How the holy Father S. Francis did eate with S. Clare, and how both were rapt into extasie. This is taken out of the 4. chapter of the 10. booke, and hither transferred to his proper place.

Sainct Francis being att our Lady of Angels, was infinite times importuned by his first spirituall daughter S. Clare, to take his recreation once with her. Yet though she were of sanctity sufficientlie knowne to all people, he would neuer consent thereto: att length the glorious saincte fearing that when she least thought therof, God might call vnto him the holy Father, such being the infirmities whervnto he was subiect, so that she should neuer enioy that consolation in all her life, she so much solicited all Religious that were most auncient and best beloued of the S. to obtaine so honest a request in her behalfe, that they together so affectionately entreated him, as that in the end he consented therevnto: But to auoyd scandall and ill example to his Religious, and that they should not therby challenge a consequence of going to eat att the monasteries of Religious women, he cauled S. Clare to come with some of her Religious, to our Lady of Angels, where he had consecrated her vnto God, and he very curteously entertayned her with all her Religious, then hauing with her made a long prayer vnto the Virgin Mary, and hauing deuoutly visited the altares, he made preparation according to his custome vpon the ground, and att the ordinary houre, they sate downe, where for the first course, he began so highly to discourse of God, that himselfe, S. Clare, and all the Religious were so rapt in extasie, that they were no longer of this world: but hauing their eyes lifted vp, they were as it were out of themselves.

Att that instant it seemed to the Burgesles of the citty of Alsifium, that they saw the house of our Lady of Angels, with althe circuit, & the very Mountaines to burne: they seemed also to see an exceeding great fire ouer the monastery much more violent then the rest: wherefore they all ran hastily to quench it. But being come to the church, they found neither fire nor flame, but that of the holy Ghost, which they considered and very well perceaued, in the countenances and aspectes of those whome they found yet sitting and swallowed vp in God, with S. Clare, and all her companions: from whence awaking, & all finally finding the grace of God, they did eat & vse litle other thinge,

being already satisfied and filled with that celestiall food. So euery one departed, giuing thanckes to God, who alwayes offereth and presenteth himselfe to them that in charitie vnite themselues vnto him. Saincte Clare retourned to her monasterie of S. Damian, wher here Religious receaued her with much consolation, because they feared that S. Francis would haue sent her to found some monastery other where, as he had done her Sister Agnes, whome he had sent to Florence.

The 31. and 32. chapters are formerlie inserted, after the last chap. of the first booke, so to obserue the true Order of the life of S. Francis.

How S. Francis knew that it was the Will of God he should helpe to saue soules by his preaching, and not only by prayer: and how he instituted the Order of Penitents, called the thirde Order.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

THe true seruant of God, desiring to serue his master entierlie in such thinges as should be most gratefull to his diuine maiestie, in fidelitie and perfection of life, without respect to any kinde of consolation temporall, or spirituall: there arose a doubt in his spirit, wherof he diuers times conferred with his Brethren in this manner: My brethren I beseech you by the charitie which liueth and is amongst you, to tell me, what I ought to doe, and whither of these two exerciles you esteeme more to the seruice of God: either that I applie my selfe entierlie to prayer, or that I also labour in preaching, so to instruct the ignorant the way of God: I am of litle and simple stature, as you see, and cannot teach with wordes full of doctrine: and withall, hauing on the other side receaued a greater grace of God to pray, then to speake, I would more willinglie applie me to continuall prayer: besides that, I know by experience, that there is a great gaine, and a certaine augmentation of grace in prayer, whereas to preach is to impart and communicate to others, those litle gifts which one receaueth of God; prayer is a lustre of good desires and of the pious affections of the soule, and a collection of celestiall vertues, vnited to the true and supreme good: but preaching is to bedust the spirituall feet: that is, the amorous affections of the hart towards God, which serue as feet and foundation to all the spirituall edifice, a man by it detourning himselfe from seuerity

uerity of life, and rigour of discipline. In prayer we speake vnto God, and harken vnto him when he speaketh to vs, and leading a life in manner Angelicall, we more conuerse in heauen with the Angels, then here on earth with men: wheras preaching, we must alwayes conuerse with men, and liue among them, to conuert them, to tell them the truth, and to heare many worldly thinges of them: Neuertheles there is one thing in preaching verie contrarie to all these, which maketh much in behalfe therof, and is worthy of great consideration, discouering vnto vs that God maketh esteeme therof, which is, that his only Sonne, who is soueraigne goodnes, the only modell of diuine wisdom, descended from the bosome of his eternall Father, to enstruct the world, to teach by his holy example, and to preach vnto men, the word of saluation, wherby he afterwarde saued the predestinate soules, washing them with his precious blood, reuiuing them by his death, and maintayning them by his most sacred body, in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, not reseruing any thing to himselfe which he did not graciouslie giue vnto vs to further our saluation; In that respect we are obliged by his example to doe whatsoeuer we thinck may be pleasing vnto him, to leaue all our affections, and for a time omitting prayer, to applie vs to preaching. Further, to tell you the truth; on the one side mine owne will allureth me to repose: on the other, I remember when I retourned from Rome, with the confirmation of the rule, God reuealed vnto me that his intention was I should remaine, not in desertes, but in the world to alsist the redemption of many soules from the swallow of the deuill. In regard of all these considerations, I craue your counsaile: because God would neuer reueale it vnto me, for I euery day with verie great instance demaund the same of him.

All the Religious answered, that they were not capable to counsaile and satishe him therein: then calling Brother Macie, he said: Goe to thy Sister Clare, and in my behalfe will her with all her sisters, to pray vnto God, that he will please to teach me to performe his seruice in this point: and hauing done this message, goe to Mount Subasio, to Brother Siluester, who by the holy Ghost is made worthy of diuine discourse, and who by his merittes obtayneth of God what grace he pleaseth; to him deliuer from me the same message. Brother Macie hauing accomplished his commission, and retourning, S. Francis receaued him with verie great charitie, for he washed his feet, and made him eat, then conducted him to the toppe of a mountaine, where kneeling downe, with his head bare, and armes crossed, he said to Brother Macie: What pleaseth my Lord IESVS CHRIST that I doe: who answered that Brother Siluester setting himselfe to

prayer, as soone as he had spoken, he had reuelation frō God, that he had not called him to this vocation, for his proper and particuler benefit: but that by meane of his preaching, many lost soules might be conuerted to penance and told him withall that the same had bin reuealed to S. Clare. God would haue this matter thus to proceed, that euery one might by diuers testimonies know, wherefore his diuine Maiesty had sent this his seruant into the world. The S. of God standing vpon his feet, hauing heard this answere which he desired to heare on his knees, as a resolution from the almighty, replenished with the holy Ghost, and enflamed in the loue of IESVS CHRIST, he answered Brother Macie, lett vs then goe Brother in the name of God, and so transported by the holy Ghost, he that very houre put himselfe in iorney, hauing called Brother Angelus for a third companion: he knew not whither he went, but committed himselfe to the conduct of the holy Ghost, and so he arrived att a towne called Carnerio, two leagues from Alsifium where he preached to the people, with so great a seruour, and generall edification, that as well the men as women, hauing heard him so piously to discourse of the contempt of the world, and seing that God spake by him, they were so moued, that almost all of them would haue abandoned their owne houses and followed him to effect his holy counsailes: but that the S. inspired of God, willed them not to stirre: but that they should liue vprightly in the feare of his diuine Maiesty, obseruing his holy commandementes; and should educate and trayne vp their children and family christianlike, alwayes hoping in God, and shunning sinne as their greatest enemy, and told them he would not faile to enstruct the way to find pardon att Gods handes: But all these wordes were vaine for these people hauing no further power to resist the holy Ghost that boyled in their hart, would not yeld to him nor be satisfied, till he had receaued them al for Brothers & sisters of his order: and so by diuine inspiration the glorious Father S. Francis instituted the third order of penitentes, which is for personnes of all qualities, virgins, maryed people, widowes of both sex, whereof we shall particularly treat hereafter in the ninth booke of the second part.

*The first
occasion
and originall
of the peni-
tents of
the third
Order of
S. Franc.*

Of the first Chapter of the third Order, and of the reuelation made by one possessed, vnto S. Francis; This was the eight chapter, of the ninth booke, and here placed as a matter particularly appertayning to saint Francis.

THe yeare 1222. there was among others a man of this Order called Bartholameo, a Procuratour, who hauing heard a sermon of S. Francis, was conuerted to God, and gaue ouer the proces-

ses

ses of the world, and being cloathed in the habitt of the third Order,
 he endeauored by a continuall spirituall labour to produce frutes wor-
 thy of pennance, so that he attayned to such a sanctity of life, and fami-
 liarity with the holy Father S. Francis, that he authorized him in his
 place for euer to admitt men and women into the third Order. It hap-
 pened that this mā had accidentally a possessed person in his house, that
 did neuer rest babling, neuer theles att the comming of S. Francis he be-
 came mute and so continued for three dayes, the time of S. Francis his
 aboad there: Which the master of the house found very straunger: yet
 not to molest the holy Father, to whome he carryed a singuler reueren-
 ce, he forbare to discouer any thing vnto him: the holy Father being de-
 parted, and the possessed beginning againe to talke, the said Bartholomeo
 asked him in the name of God, why he had bin so mute, wherto the
 possessed resisting, and the coniurations augmented, att length he said:
 know that till that Religious was departed, I was so bound of God, that
 I could neuer vtter one word. This man of God replied: hath then that
 Religious so great vertue as for three dayes to make thee mute? the pos-
 sessed answered: it is not long since that our Prince being with all his
 troupe assembled, gaue vs to vnderstand, that God had neuer aban-
 donned the world, but that he sent it some of his seruantes, as Noe,
 Abraham, Moyses, and att length his Sonne himselte; and since that ti-
 me, the charitie of Christians being was so cold, that the benefitt
 of the passion of his Sonne, was as it were vtterlie bannished all
 memorie and consideration, wherfore he (our Prince) much admrred
 that God did so long so beare to giue it succoure, but when he saw this
 Religious to issue forth with such a sublimity of cōtempt of the world,
 and with such a resignation of himselte vnto God, yeato renew the
 life of IESVS CHRIST on earth, drawing after him such a mul-
 titude of the world, and particulerlie of perfect men, he manifest-
 lie knew that this was the man whome he feared to come: he ther-
 fore excited vs all to persecute him, and to that purpose, it is not
 long since that manie thousandes of vs were assembled in an orato-
 rie, where we found meanes to ruinate his Order: for we will induce
 therinto the familiarity of women against chastity, and the admission
 of yong men without spirit, against pouerty, magnificent and sumptu-
 ous buildinges, proud Prelates, that shall haue no power to cōtaine the-
 selues within the bōdes of humility, against obediēce diuersty of opi-
 nions, and other things which now I wil not discouer: lett it suffice thee
 that we will labour so much as to get the vpper hād, & this Order, which
 thou seest so eminent, shall come to such ruine; and be so contempti-
 ble to men as is admirable. Albeit in that time there shall arise an other
 Religious of the same Order of no lesse vertue then this Frācis. He shall

*An at-
tempt &
assembly
of deuils
against
the Or-
der of
Frere
Minors.*

attaine to that sanctity, that the third part of men shalbe by his example and predication conuerted to penance: we haue now resolued with all our possibility to oppugne and assault this order; and to that end there are lately sent eight thousand of my companions, to a Monastery where there are but seauen Brethren, to tempt them. This was two yeares before S. Francis receaued the stigmates. And though it be not receaued for a truth, because it was spooken by a deuill; neuertheles that which is since arriued causeth a beleife that God forced him to vter it: this not being the first time that God hath manifested his secrettes vnto the world by the mouth of deuils, as in the time of our lord I E S V S C H R I S T, when he constrayned them to confesse that he was his true Sonne.

How S. Francis departing from Carnerio, preached to diuers birds.

THE XXXIV. CHAPTER.

Sainct Bonauenture and S. Antony doe recount, that S. Francis being departed out of the said Carnerio, before he came to Benamino, he saw on a tree a great number of birdes of diuers kindes, and hard by them an other Iquadron, a matter indeed deseruing consideration, in regard that it seemed to signifie I know not what extraordinary thing, as it happened. For the S. inspired of God, causing his companions to stay behinde, went to preach to the said birdes, and comming neere to the tree, saluted them in these wordes: The peace of God be with you: and they shewing signes of ioy, approached all to this predication: those that were on the tree descended to the ground, and rancked themselues with the other, and keeping a quiet silence, they seemed to expect when the holie Father would begin: Wherefore he thus discoursed vnto them: My Brother Birdes; ye are exceedingly obliged alwayes to prayse God your Creatour, for he hath giuen you winges, wherwith you lightlie fly in the aire and whither you will, a fauour that he hath not giuen to so manie other Creatures. He hath also adorned and cloathed you with fethers, and they of diuers delectable and beautifull coulours: he hath created your bodyes light, and supporteth you without any paine of yours, permitting you to enioie the labours of men. He hath also giuen you a qualitie of singing verie delightfull: then he conserueth and hath conserued you from the beginning of the world: he miraculously cōserued you from the deluge, sending couples of euerie kinde into the arck of Noe, there to be preserued: he hath giuen you for habitation one of the foure elementes: therefore doth holie scripture ordinatilie call you the birdes of heauen, besides that you possesse the moun-

Matt. 6.

mountaines and hilles, the vallyes and plaines att your pleasure, the fountaines, riuers, trees, and houles for nestes: it hath pleased God himselfe by his sacred mouth to testifie vnto the world, that you neither spinning, nor in any sort labouring, he hath care to cloath you, both sommer and winter, and to giue you althings necessary to your conseruation. All which benefittes, are pregnant signes of the loue which God beareth you as his creatures. And therefore my Brothers and sisters, blessed of God, beware that you be not ingratefull vnto his diuine Maiesty; but prayle him alwayes deuoutlie, with your sweet accenttes, sith he hath giuen wherewithall.

The Sainct hauing ended his sermon, all these birdes (which is admirable) began to open their billes and beate their winges, as if they would haue said, we thanke you, but being vnable verballie, bowing their heades they manifested vnto him, their due reuerence, and that they expected his benediction to prayle God, and so to depart. The holie Father was much comforted in beholding those gestures, perceaing these creatures to be so obedient vnto their Creator; and therefore for their farwell he gaue them his benediction, which hauing receaued; they with one accord mounted into the aire, filling it with most pleasing accenttes, then did they diuide and separate themselues in the aire into foure bandes, conformable to the benediction which the holie Father had giuen them in forme of a crosse. S. Francis returned to his companions, who were as beside themselues seeing such straunge meruailes in vnreasonable creatures, he asking them pardon in great humilitie, for hauing made them attend, whiles he preached to those birdes, whome he found so prepared to heare the worde of God. He thenceforward preached, to all creatures, exhorting them to prayle their Creatour, that all the world might yeld honour, glorie and prayse to God.

A short aduertisement, for the better understanding of this miracle, and some other the like, consayned in this Cronicle of S. Francis: added for the better understanding of the simple.

The glorious Father S. Francis was not ignorant, that dumbe creatures, were not capable of his sermon, and therefore preached not vnto them to instruct them, but to stir vp him selfe the more to admire the goodnes of God. And God (no dout) to comfort his deuout seruant, made the very vnreasonable creatures by a secret instinct, to reuerence the Sainct, whilst he preached vnto them, or rather, whilst he preached to him selfe in them, and by them: the holie Scripture being full of such sermons, and namelie the four last psalmes of the prophet Dauid, and the Canticle of the three children in the furnace of Babilon, which what else are they but such sermons as Sainct Fr. made vnto these creatures to adore their Creator?

Of the vertue and efficacie of the holy Father S. Francis his preaching,
and of certaine miracles wrought toerby.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

THrough whatsoeuer townes and villages he trauailed, he preached with such seruour and spirit, and with such efficacie that there was no hart so obdurate but was moued to penance. Besides that which is spoaken of the towne of Carnerio, it many times arriued, that there followed him more then thirty or fise and thirty men conuerted to penance by his discourses, who did not only abandon vanities, as the custome is for ten or twelue dayes, but did vtterly and entierly forsake the world, following God in his Euangelicall pouerty. He admirablie confounded the blindenes of heretikes, and exalted the faith of the Romane Church, which he performed by the meane of the science which the holy Ghost had infused into him, and of the merueillous miracles which God wrought by him, who was also present & fauorable vnto him in all his actions. He expelled diuels out of the humane bodies which they possessed, and cured all diseases. Wherefore men and women, poore and rich, gentlemen and yeomen, Ecclesiasticall and seculars, from all partes repaired to heare and see him discourse, as a mā descended from heauen: many of his hearers, without any retourne to their houses remayned with him to doe penance. His word was as a fire that penetrated the interiour of hartes, leauing him that felt it contrite and penitent, for he preached not with an eloquence and humane science, but by the holy Ghost and by diuine reuelation. Therefore preaching alwayes according to what IESVS CHRIST inspired him, he vttered nothing but the same verity, with great zeale and without any feare or respect. He could not dissemble among the great, nor much lesse flatter them: but he reprehended their vices, and if they were guilty of publicke sinnes he corrected them with seuerer demonstrations, exciting them to penance, he preached the word of God with like attention to the meaner sort as to great personnes, he as carefully instructed a small number as a great, for which cause he was indifferētly heard of euerie one, as a man sent them from God for their saluation, and so much the more in regard that they saw his wordes confirmed by miracles, as here ensueth.

S. Francis being one day on the sea shoare att Gagetto, and a great multitude of people that were very deuout vnto him flocking to heare and see him, and to haue his benediction, he, that shunned honour, being retired into a barke to hide himselfe, felt the vessel miraculously to moue it selfe from the port, and being a litle, yet enough retired, it arrested im-

*S. Franc.
Was, mo-
ued and
stayed of
it selfe
to giue*

mouable

moveable, as it had bin a hard marble in the middes of the waters: *him bet-
whereby knowing the will of God, turning to the people who excee-
dingly admired the euent, he made them a very behoufull sermon: then
according to their desire he blessed them with the signe of the crosse, pre-
which gaue them great consolation, and the S. insinuating their depar-
ture, after they were retired from the shoare when it pleaed the S. the
barke of it selfe approached againe, so that one might say, the soule was
obstinate that refused to obey him, whome the very drie wood obeyd.*

Preaching in a Church att Aluiano, being exceedingly disturbed by *swal-
the swalloes, he commanded them to be silent and giue care to the word
of God till he had done. Att those wordes (which was admirable) the
swallows ceased to flye and sing, and neuer stirred till he had ended his
preaching: this miracle was so generally spred with exceeding edification
to all that heard it, that a scholler at Paris being very much disquieted
by a swallow, laide to himselfe, this iame should be one of the swallows
that troubled the holie Father S. Francis when he preached: wherefore
with a very strong faith he said, I commaund the swallow in vertue of
the holy Father S. Francis to be silent and to come to me. This was not
uttered in vaine, for the swallow by those wordes constrained, incon-
continentlie flew to his fist; wherat admiring, he committed her to the
feildes, and after that she was neither heard nor seene.*

Of certaine miracles of the holy Father S. Francis.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

IN the city of Thoscauella, he cured the sonne of a knight that had *He cured
with great deuotion entertayned him, who being borne without a bennu-
reines could not stir frō where he was sett: the S. taking him by the
hand, made him arise and stand on his feet, wheron he alwayes after wal-
ked very well, & as a sound as any other, to the great contentment of
the Father and all them that knew him, who therin praysed God and his
seruant. In the city of Naruia S. Francis cured one of the palsey, att the
request of the bishop of that place, which he effected by the signe of the
crosse, which he made on him from the head to the feet, which being
done, the sicke arose instantlie sound from his bed. In the bishop-
prick of Rierte, he cured a childe ouer-gone with the dropsie, who
had his belly so swollen, that he could not see his feet: the Saint being
moued to compalsion by meane of the mother that brought the child
vnto him, by the only touch of his hand, cured him, to the ex-
ceeding admiration, edification, and thanckelgiuing of all that knew
it. He also restored health to another, that was so extremelie crooked
and curbed that his face and feet did almost meet, he had compalsion of*

- He restored the* the Father that endured more then the child it selfe; whome he cured by
use of a the signe of the crosse. He restored the vse of a womans handes that
womans were withered, by the signe of the crosse, this was done in the city of
hands. Agubio, and att the very instant this woman prepared dinner for the S.
He restoreth sight and many poore people. In the city of Niuiano he restored sight to a
to one blinde, thrise annoynting his eyes with his spetle, and making the signe
blinde. of the crosse on them in honour of the holy Trinity. At Narui he cured
An other. an other by the signe of the crosse. By the same signe of the crosse he cured
the sonne of a Gentleman of Bolonia who had a filme on his eye,
On blind which besides the hindering of his sight, was so vnseemely and disgrace-
of one full to behold, that it molested them that looked thereon. This child
eye. being full growne acknowledging this benefitt became a Frere Minor,
confessing that he saw more perfectly with the eye that the S. had cured,
One pos- then with the other. So in the same time the holy Father S. Francis illu-
seised. minated this child exteriorly and interiorly. Being lodged at S. Ge-
mignano with owne deuout vnto him, who had his wife extremelie
An other. tormented by the deuill: which he knowing, after some prayer made,
he commanded the deuill in the name of God to depart, and instantlie
he left the woman att libertie. In the citie of Castella he deliuered an
other possessed and tormented of the deuill. A Religious being vexed
with an horrible and terrible disease, the fittes wherof comming on him,
made him more like to one possessed, then afflicted with any other infir-
One of a mity: for he became so loath some, and bespotted with such different
strange coulours, that he terrified those that beheld him, he gaue notice to the S.
disease. & recommended himselfe vnto him. He taking compassion of him, pre-
sently sent him a soppe of the bread which he was then eating, which
the diseased with a very strong faith and deuotion hauing eaten, was
instantlie cured and was no more sicke till his death. Att the Castell of
A cord of Pieue, a man much deuoted to S. Francis so laboured that he got a cord
the said wherewith S. Francis had bin long time girded; with the only touch
S. Wrou- wherof, he cured al the sick of the neighbour places, and if he could not
ght many repayre vnto them, he therewith touched the water which they were
miracles. to drinck, which hauing drunck they were incontinentlie cured: this con-
tinued a long time, according to the merittes and faith of them that ap-
plied it. Some preferred the crumes and morcels that remainyed of the
And the S. bread, which they afterwarde with great faith would giue to the
crummes sick, and many were miraculously cured therby, the diuine vertue wor-
that re- king al these thinges to the glory of his faithfull seruant, and for the sal-
mayned uation of soules, to the end to induce people the more desiredly to heare
after his him, and to conuert themselues to penance.
refectio.

How S. Francis going to preach, the Mountaine of Aluerne was given him by a noble man of Toscare.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis departing one time from Spolera, to goe to Romagna, hauing taken Brother Leo for his companion, they vnderstood by the way that a solemne feast was held in a great towne called Montfeltro where many gentlemen were assembled: whervpon he said to his companion: Brother lett vs goe to that feast, we may there doe some good: and so they went and entred directlie into the Church, where then was the Lord Orland Earle of Chiuiisi, who was very deuout to S. Francis by reason of his reputation, and much desired to see and heare him. Now this man vnderstanding of his coming, went presently to heare him as he began to preach on a wall, the better to be heard, and for want of a pulpitt or chaire of sufficient hight. His theme or text was this: *I hope no more, then I take pleasure to endure*: on which wordes assisted by the holy Ghost, he deliuered worthy and merueillous matters, attributing the whole vnto the afflictions and persecutions which the Apostles and Martyres of IESVS CHRIST endured, and the Confessours that were continuall Martyres and not of one day or momentes endurance; and this they performed by the hope and liuely faith they had in recompence of their few dayes of sufferance to enioy a perpetuall fellicitie; and which other well liuing Christians endure who serue God and their neighbour with a seruent charity, and who support the temptations and afflictions of this world with patience reioycing in God with whome they are certaine to enioy his high and incomprehensibles promises. Each one was by this discourse exceedingly enflamed in the loue of God: but especialy the said Count Orlade, who was much more satisfied by the presence, doctrine, and spirit of S. Francis, then by what he had heard related, or would euer haue imagined. Wherefore the sermon being ended, he went to salute him and made knowne his deuotion vnto him; then told him that he earnestly desired (considering his affaires called him otherwhere) to speake only four wordes vnto him in secrett, concerning the good estate of his soule. The hollie Father graciously answered him that att his pleasure he should come to him after dinner, & he would attend him; and being retourned, he a long time discoursed with the S. of what most troubled his conscience, which the S. by the grace of God did incōtinently cleere; which done, the Count added: Father I haue a place in Toscare, where there is a mountaine of indifferent hight, called Auerne, which would be very conuenient for

you, wherein to spend a deuoute and contemplatiue life, because it is very solitary, I much desire you should see it, and if you finde it conuenient, you should doe me a fauour in accepting it for you residence: and certainly I should esteeme it as an extraordinary curtesie & singuler grace. The S. as presaging his good, though at othertimes he appeared more nice in like pointes, very willingly accepted it, & told him he would send two Religious to see it, and if they found it such as he described, himselfe would dwell therein, as afterward he did: and whiles he thanked him, he commaded two of his Religious whome he sent to vew it, that finding it conuenient, they should make choice of a place for a chappell and should take possession therof, which they performed: S. Francis wishing a celestiaall recompense to the Count, who instantly went to a towne which he had vnder the said mountaine, where he very honorably entertayned the said Religious, as Angels of God: and then sending with them some of his people, he commanded them to conduct the Religious ouer all the mountaine which way they desired. When they came thither, at the first sight the place pleased the Religious exceedingly, and goeing further they found a very pleasant plaine at the foot of a hill, where without further delay, being of opinion they should find no place more conuenient, they began to cutt downe bowes of trees & with the helpe of their guid to fix them in the earth, & so quickly made a lodging wherein they rested all night, taking possession in the name of S. Francis, who they aduertised therof, who full of ioy, called Brother Leo, Brother Angelus, Brother Macie, with whome he gaue thanckes to God: the imparting to the his purposes, they came together into the said Mountaine, vnto the topp whereof being ascended, he reposed vnder the shadow of an oake, whither a great number of litle birdes incontinently came to entertaine him, by their singing, with their heades and feathers discouering their inward ioy, which in deed was admirable to behold: for some flew on the head of the S. others on his shoulders, others on his handes, and his armes, with such familiarity as if they had vnderstanding. Which S. Francis perceauing, he said to his companions: My beloued Brethren, I now firmly belecue that it is Goddes pleasure we should here remaine, and therefore hauing giuen his benediction to the birdes, he proceeded to visitt the mountaine, where the two Religious meeting him, they shewed him the choice they had made for their residence: which did not content S. Francis, but circuited about till he had found an other place more to his satisfaction, where he might secretlie contemplate, and there with bowes of trees he built a cell, wherein shortly after God communicated vnto him his sacred stigmates, as in due places shall appeare.

*The miraculous
entertainment
giuen to
S. Francis
on the mount
Aluerrie.*

How in the said Mountaine God appeared vnto him on a stone, and of the priuiledges he gaue him for the Order. This was the 34. chapter of the 10. booke, transferred to this place as proper vnto it.

THe holy Father residing in the said Mountaine, our Lord appeared vnto him: who hauing manifested his will vnto him, & being departed, the holy Father S. Francis called Brother Leo, and said: Brother (sheep of God) wash that stone with water, who taking water incontinentlie washed it, then he bid him wash it with wine which he did; afterward with oyle, and he washed it; and finally he bid him wash it with baulme, and Brother Leo answered that he had none, nor none was to be had in that place. S. Francis then, expounding the figure said vnto him: Know Brother (sheep of IESVS CHRIST) ^{God} that God hauing euen now appeared vnto me on this stone, correspond- ^{graunted} dentlie to the foure things wherewith I commanded thee to wash the ^{four pri-} same, hath graunted me foure priuiledges for our Order. The first, ^{uiledges} that whosoever with all their hart shall loue me, the Frere Mi- ^{to the} nors, and their Order, shall by his grace and mercy end their life ^{Order of} happily. The second, that whosoever shall against reason persecute ^{Frere} the Order, shalbe notoriously punished. The third, that the Religious ^{Minors.} who shall perseuer impious in the said Order shall soone dye out of it, or therein shall remaine confounded. And the fourth, that the Religion shall for assistance of holy Church, continue to the end of the world.

The sequel is the rest of the 64. chapter of the first booke, transferred hither, as the proper place thereof.

THe deuill being vnable to endure such perfection of S. Francis ^{The deuil} and perceauing the greate fruit which he did and might produ- ^{Arrieth} ce, determined to kill him: wherfore the S. being one morning violently at the toppe of the mountaine, whence did hang a very deep downe- ^{to kil S.} fall, there praying to God with all his hart, the deuill to ruine him in Francis. that downefall, thrust him so violently, that he cast him farre off, vpon a great rock of the mountaine: and wheras the deuill hath no farther power ouer vs then God permitteth him, he could in no sort annoy him, for the S. inuocating the helpe of his diuine maiestie, ^{Who was} the rock wheron he was cast, receaued him in, as if it had bin a receiued heape of very tender wax, or soft earth, so that besides the space of ^{of a hard} his body, which was enclosed in the rocke, there remayned the hollow & rock ^{as} mould which he there made, as also the impressiō of his hādes & fingers of waxe. ^{when}

when he tooke hold thereon, which character or impression to the great admiration of all people, is att this present there to be seene; for all is apparentlie to be discerned; so that the deuill was confounded and enraged, and the seruant of God miraculously conserued, by that immensie vertue which is euer present to his seruantes, to releiue them as occasion shall require. Such was the possession that God gaue to his seruant, of this mountaine: lett vs now then retourne to speake of the innocencie of the holy Father, which caused the birdes, as we haue said, to secure themselues on him, as on a solitarie tree, they knowing his interior: and lett vs obserue how many other creatures did the like.

Of the familiarity and obedience which all kinde of creatures had vnto the holy Father S. Francis.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

*The brut
beastes
honoured
S. Fr.
shewing
to acknowledge
his sanctity.*

THe soule of the glorious Father S. Francis was in such sort endued with sanctitie, that he euidentlie declared that he had obtained of God, the first estate of innocencie interior and exterior; for in this estate he conserued himselfe perfectly subiect and obedient vnto God, whence followed that he was so much honoured and obeyed of other creatures his inferiours, ouer whome God had giuen him dominion, as by the examples ensuying we shall make appeare. Pasing one time by the city of Sienna, he found a great flock of sheepe feeding in a meadowe, and comming neere them, he very courteouslie saluted them. They leauing their pasture (as if they had bin capable of reason) went towards him, and with their head lifted vp beholding him, made shew that they reioyced att his presence. The Religious companions of the S. and the shepheardes, were exceedingly amazed att such a nouelty, that sheepe, muttens, and lambes as reasonable creatures, should demonstrate that they admired and reuerenced the S. They would not retourne to their feeding till the holy Father had giuen them his benediction.

Att our Lady of Angels one gaue him a sheepe, which he most gratefully receaued, for the naturall simplicitie, innocencie, and meeknes which is in sheepe. This holy Father admonished this sheepe to be carefull to praise God, and to be wary not to offend or be offended by the Religious, which the sheepe to her utmost obserued and performed: yea so seriously as if it had discretion to obey a master. When the Religious went to sing in the quire, the beast went also, and followed them to the Church, where without any instruction, she would kneele downe;

Then

Then in steed of singing she would leap and bleat before the altare of the virgin Mary, and of her Sonne the lambe without sport, as if she would salute and prayse them. And when one eleuated the sacred host att the Masse, she inclined, kneeling downe, honouring and adoring her Creator, as if she would inuite deuout Christians to giue more honour to the Sacrament, and check and reprehend the indeuout for their littel reuerence.

*A sheepe
sheweth
a will to
honour,
praise
& adore
God.*

S. Francis had some time att Rome a litle lambe, in memory and mindfulnes of the patient lambe IESVS CHRIST: and being to depart, he recommended it to a Roman gentlewoman his deuoted freind, called Iaqueline of Sertefoli: the lambe followed her as the S. commanded it goeing and retourning from church: if the houre of masse did passe hauing heard the clock, it solicited her with his voice, and by gestures, so that the disciple of S. Francis was master of deuotion vnto this gentlewoman. Being in the Oratory of Grecio, on presented him with a leuerett, but he presently sett him att liberty, that he might runne away, but seeing that he would not runne away, but was only remoued from him, he recalled it, and the leuerett incontinently lept on his legges, and he embracing it as his child, sweetly asked it why it permitted it selfe to be so taken: then hauing compalsion of it, he deliuered it to a Religious to carry it to the mountaine, to some desert and secure place and there to leaue it, aduertising it first that it should be carefull not to be taken againe of any man. Many other like accidentes happened vnto him. In the lake of Perusia, a wild conny being taken, and giuen to the S. as soone as it saw him, it ran and lept into his handes and bolome. Pasing by the lake of Reite, to goe to the hermitage of Grecio, a fisher presented him on great deuotion with a water bird, which the S. ioyfully receauing, opened his fist, that it might fly away, but the bird stirred not: the S. lifting his eyes towardes heauen, remayned long time as in an extasie, then comming to himselfe as if he had retourned from some farre country, seeing the bird still in his hand, he gaue it his benediction, and gently commanded it to goe whither it would: and so the bird hauing receaued his benediction flew merily away. In the same lake was giuen him a great fish aliue, which hauing accepted, and thancked the giuer, he putt againe into the lake, the fish mounting presently vpon the water, alwayes followed the S. by the riuer side, till he came to the place where the S. was to depart, and there staying he began to sport aboute the water, and would not depart till the S. had giuen him his benediction.

*And a
lambe
likewise.*

*A leuerett
became
tame vnto
him at
an instant.*

*A wild
conny
likewise.
And a
water
bird.*

*As also a
great
fish.*

Of many other miracles like to the precedente.

THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

Sainct Francis passing with his companion by the Marishes of Venise, found a great number of birdes on a tree which sung verie melodiously, neere vnto whome he went with his companion to say his canonicall houres and to prayse God with them who stirred not; yea the S. comming to say his office, they so rayled their tunes, that the holie Father and his companion did not well vnderstand one another: wherefore he willed them to stay a while till they had ended their office. They were incontinetly silent and sung no more til the office was sayd, after which he gaue them leaue to sing, and then they began againe with more delight the before, to the great contentment of the S. There was att our lady of Angels a figge tree wheron was a grasse hopper, att whose singing S. Frâcis (as one that in the least creatures did alwayes consider the greatnes of his Creatour) did ofte awake to prayse God. He one day called her, and she instantly flew vnto his hand. He comanded her by her song to prayse God, and she began to sing, and neuer ceased till he comanded her to be silent, and to retourne to her place: Being retourned to the figge tree, she euery day att the same houre came flying to the handes of the S. One day he said to his brethren: I will that we giue liberty to our sister, which hauing done she flew away, and as a true daughter of obedience was neuer seene after. Being sick in the citty of Sienna, a gentleman a deuoted freind of his, sent him a pheasant taken a liue, which being before him, shewed such signes of familiarity, that he who brought him could not hold him; so great a desire had it to come to the Sainct, who receauing it would not claspe it in his fist: but carryed it att libertie, that it might fly away, but it settled in his handes, wherefore hauing committed it to a freind of his, to keepe, the pheasant for greife would neuer eate, till it was brought againe to the Sainct, who hauing receaued it, it began to eat verie ioyfully. A Faulcon did nest on the mountaine of Auerne, close vnto the celle of saint Francis, which came to the Sainct as familiarlie as if he had bin a deere freind. In the night it serued him as an alarme or watch, singing att the ordinarie houres that the Sainct accustomed to pray, which pleased him will: for the care which the Faulcon had, freed him from care, and so much the more because by diuine instinct, when he was sicke, the faulcon as if it had had discretion, deferred his call about, two howers, or more according to the necessitie which the Sainct had to repose; att other times verie gentlie after the breake of day. This proceeding

*Birdes
obeyed S.
Francis.*

*Of a
grasse-
hopper.*

*Of a phe-
sant.*

*Of a
Faulcon
that ser-
ued S. F.
for an
alarme.*

ceding doutles is strange wherby God mayntained his seruant . As S. Francis was one time in his trauaile he willed his companion to prepare him to eat, which hauing done, and the Sainct blessing the table, a Nightingall began to sing so sweetlie, that the Sainct replenished with ioy said to his companion: Brother, see how this sweet Nightingall inuitheth vs to prayse God, sing therefore with him: Brother Leo excusing himselfe by his vnpleasing voice, he began himselfe to singe: the nightingall being silent when he sung, and singing when he rested, alternatiuelie, so that he was allured on by that sweet musicke euen till night, when being wearie he confessed to Brother Leo, that the nightingall had ouercome him in the praise of God, then he said, lett vs eat, it is time, and being sat the nightingall first flew on his head, then on his shoulders, and armes, and att length on his hand where it tooke of him to eat, and then hauing receaued his benediction it flew way.

*Of a
nightin-
gal.*

How he made gentle a very fierce woulfe. This was the 29. chapter of the 10. booke, transferred hither to his place.

Goeing to preach in the cittie of Agubio, he found it in deep despaire, by reason of a woulfe, that did not onlie deuoure the cattell, but killed men and women, and did eat people, in respect wherof they durst not goe out of the cittie but armed in companie; and therefore the Sainct went with his companion to seeke out the woulfe, against the liking of the Cittizens who feared his aduenture, he refusing to accept of any companie with him. The Cittizens to behold the successe, dispersed themselues on the hilles and mountaines about the cittie. They expected not long, but they saw the woulfe with extreme furie come towards the Sainct. The Agubians then began to cry out and bid saint Francis to fly, but the seruant of I E S V S C H R I S T, armed with the weapon of inuincible faith, went couragiouslie against him, and opposed against him the signe of the crosse, and in a moment tourned the woulfe into the nature of a lambe, then curteouslie said vnto him: Brother woulfe come hither, I commaund thee in the name of my God, that thou offend neither me nor any other. Att these wordes, which was admirable, the woulfe fell att his feet expecting what the Sainct would enioyne him, who said: Thou hast committed so many homicides, and made such spoiles in this countrie, that thou hast a thousand times deserued death. The soules of those whome thou hast murdered cry to God for iustice against thee:

Tt 2

but

but because thou hast humbled thy selfe, if thou promise amendement I will procure thy pardon. Wherto the woulfe seemed to answere clapping his taile against the ground, humbling his head and weeping, thereby making shew that he would obey; which the S. vnderstanding said: Goe to, sith henceforward thou wilt doe no more hurt, I will procure thee food of this towne for all the time of thy life: pardonning thee all the offences past, as if thou haddest neuer offended: for we know that whatsoeuer thou hast done, thou hast bin thereto constrained by necessity of hunger: but giue me thy faith neuer to offend more. Att which wordes the woulfe lifting vp his legge layed his paw in his hand: thou mayst now, said the S. come with me without any feare, and so he followed him as a little dogge. The S. being come into a spacious place of the citty with the woulfe, there was such affluence of people to see the miracle, that there could be no more. Therefore he made the a sermon, demonstrating vnto them that God had sent these scourges vnto men for their sinnes: but that the mouth of this woulfe was nothing in comparison of that of the infernall woulfe, which afterwards expected the soules to deuoure them eternally: he admonished the therefore to doopenance, if they would be freed both from the one and the other, then said vnto them: My Freindes, behold here the woulfe which hath promised me to doe you no more mischeife: you must also promise to releiue him. Which the people hauing promised him, he turned to the woulfe and bad him promise them also to doe them no more hurt, and to aske them pardon. Admirable accident! the woulfe in signe of repêrance incontinently falling one his knees laid his Muzzle on the ground, and the S. causing him againe to giue his paw in pledge of peace, I promise said he, for the one and the other party, and so he liued two full yeares in the middes of the citty, without any dogges barcking att him: then he dyed to the great greife of all the Cittizens, who seeing him, were induced to the loue of God, by the memory of so rare amiracle and benefitt which he had done them, by meane of his seruant S. Francis.

How it being necessary that saint Francis should haue a cauter made with a burning iron, the fire obeying him lost his force.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

Not onlie the beastes obeyed S. Francis: but euen the very elementes, as may appeare by the example following, and others to be inserted hereafter. The glorious Father was long time afflicted with sicknes, and hauing no meanes of cure, he was, by reason that

that the cold was aduersiue vnto him, as the Protestour had appointed, remoued from Rieta to Fonte Colombo, for better commodity of the Phisicion that had care of him; and to defend him from the aire that was verie dangerous vnto him, and from the splendour of the sunne which he could not endure, they made him a great capuce, and put a gread bande ouer his eyes. Now the Phisicion being come and perceiving the danger of the disease, affirmed that there must necessarilie be applyed a cautere behind the eare, next that eye which was most offended, in which act, though the holy Father S. Francis deferred his cure, fearing perhappes to dye in the absence of the Vicar Generall who was to be there: neuertheles the infirmitie encreasing and the Vicar not comming, it was necessarie to proceed and to applye the fire, and especially because in a whole night he could take no repose. Wherefore the night following he made this exhortatiō to the Religious that attended and watched with him, taking compalsion of him that by his occasion, he reposed neither night nor day no more then him selfe: Brother and my beloued sonne, I beseech thee lett it not afflict thee, to suffer and take paines for me in this my sicknes: for God will giue thee recompense of thy labour both in this life and the other: and will reward thee euen for all the good workes thou omittest to doe by meanes of mine infirmitie. Yea I aduertise thee that thou gaynest much more by this charitie, then thou shouldest by prayer; for they that serue and assise me in such necessitie; serue all the bodie of our Order and assise to mayntaine it. Therefore thou mayest securelie say vnto God; offering this thy seruice: My God! I spend my time in seruice of this man, for which thou art indebted to me, considering that I serue him for thy sake. The S. spake this, to the end that being by the deuill overcome of impatience, he should not loose his meritt. And therefore as we said a litle before, seeing the imminent perill wherein he laboured, and the trouble of his Religious, he consented that preparation should be made to administer vnto him the cautere appointed by the Phisicion, though his vicare were not present. Euerie thing necessarie then being prepared; S. Francis seeing the burning iron, had a naturall feare of the torment he was to endure: wherefore he mildlie vttered these wordes to the fire: My noble brother, most profitable of all other creatures by the almightie created; I pray thee with my vtmost affection, haue compalsion of me in this thine action, and vse not thy rigour against me, sith I loue thee so much for our Creatours sake, of whome I demaund so much fauour, as to moderate thy seruour and heat in such sort that my feebleness may support it. Then he made the signe of the crosse on the fierie bullet, when in meane while the Religious left him alone with the Surgeon, for great compalsion they

had of him, and being vnable to behold his torment and endurance. Now the iron hauing bin applied the S. recalling them they retourned, to whome he said: O weake of hart and more weake of faith ! why did you fly? I would haue you know that I felt not any payne, yea^e if it be thought that the Surgeon haue not well made the cautere, I am content to haue an other made, then an other, till it be well made. The Surgeon and Religious being amazed att so strang a miracle, wherby he saw force did faile to annoy but not to benefitt, in such sort that the S. held himselfe immoueable without hauing his head held, and insensible of the hoat iron, he knew not what else to say but that in effect, there was no other good in this world, but to be the true seruant of almighty God.

Of the loue which the holy Father S. Francis boare to all creatures for the loue of his Creatour.

THE XLI. CHAPTER.

BVt it is not so much to be admired that the fire and other creatures obeyed S. Francis when he commanded them: for he in such sort honoured and loued them, that he reioyced with them att their good, and was so much afflicted att their detriment, as a freind were he neuer so pittifull and affectionat would doe att the domnage or detriment of his deere freind. He would discourse with them as if they had bin endued with iudgement and reason, rayfing himselfe by their meane condition, to the consideration of the greatnes of him that had created them such, therefore aboue others he carryed most affection to those creatures that had any relation vnto God, or figure, correspondence and proprietye with his seruantes, as may be said of Larkes, as hauing on their head a capuce, like to his and his Religious. And because they were humble and of earthlie colour, and walked by ditches and ordinarie wayes to seeke their releife, and then mounted sweetlie into the aire, praying their God. Wherin they shewed him example (as he said to his Religious) to be cloathed with base and courie cloth of earthly colour, and to goe humblie seeking almoses through the streetes, and hauing conuerfed here on earth as much as is necessarie, to mount afterwarde into heauen with their cogitations praying their Creatour. And therefore he once said, that if he were Emperour he would ordaine that no Larkes should be killed. Discourfing afterwarde of other creatures, he said that he would command all

Gouer-

*What
esteeme
he made
of larkes.*

Gouernours of citties and borroughes to cause wheat to be scattered and cast abroad on Christiās day in the streetes & feildes, that the birdes might haue more occasiō on that day to reioyce hauing to feed att their desire: and in memory that our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST was borne between an ox and an asse, they who had such beastes should be constrained to giue them on such day, hay and oates abundantly. Among all creatures he particularly affected the sunne, the reason hath bin formerly expressed, next vnto it, the fire, as a most noble element, he would neuer putt it out, in consideration of the innumerable benefittes which God by meane therof hath done vs, as by the examples ensuying shall appeare. Sitting one day before the fire, there lept into his lappe vpon his habitt certaine litle sparckles as it often happeneth, and albeit he saw it burne his habitt he would neuer extinguish it, nor permit a Religious there present to doe it, who att length called the Vicar whome against his will and by obedience he permitted to extinguish it. An other time on the Mountaine of Aluerne, a Religious that was his companion made a great fire in the celle where he did eat, by reason of the extreme cold that then was, which leauing enkindled, he went to call the holy Father who was in an other place, adioyning to the celle where he accustomed to pray and sleepe; where S. Francis staying him to read vnto him the gospell of that day (which if it were possible he accustomed alwayes to doe before his refection, when it chaunced that he could not here masse) the fire in meane while so wrought, that when they thought to come to warme themselues, it was mounted euen to the planching of one side of the celle: S. Francis seeing his companion labour to quench it did not asist him, but taking vp a skinne of furre that was there wherwith he couered himselfe in the night; he returned into the mountaine, the other Religious perceiving the fire, came all out of their Oratorie, and extinguished it in an instant: which being done S. Francis going to eat, said to his companion: I will no more vse this skinne of furre, because by reason of mine auarice I could not endure that my Brother fire should consume it for it selfe. After the fire he affected the element of water, because by it was signified penance and affliction: by reason that with it the soule was washed by meane of the sacrament of Baptisme: therefore when he washed his face and handes, he alwayes sought a place where the water falling away might not be trodden on and fowled. He also reuerenced the stones, so that sometimes he trebled to tread on them, remembring the corner stone I. C. He commaunded the Religious that made prouision of wood on the môtaine, not to fell the whole tree, but alwayes to leaue a great stocke in remembrance

*How he
loved the
element
of fire.*

*And the
water.*

*The sta-
nes.
The
wood.*

*And the
flowers.*

brance of him that for our saluation would dye on the hard wood of the crosse. He forbad the gardener to take vp an entier plant and roote together to be eaten, as many doe: but commanded him to leaue sufficient wherby to spring againe, that in season it might produce flowers, for his sake and in memory of him that would be tearmed a flower. He would that the gardener should make a litle garden alone and seuerall from the greater, of sweet delicious and pleasing herbes to behold, that producing flowers in their season, they might be inuited each one to prayse God for their beauty, considering that all creatures speake in their language, and say: Man, God hath made and created vs for thee alone, to the end that thou praise our Creatour by vs and in all his workes. Therefore he would haue them of all personnes esteemed as a mirour, which beholding, they might admire the greatenes of their Creatour, and might alwayes seeke some subiectes the more to loue, honour and adore him.

*Of a miracle intituled of apples, because Sainct Francis demanding
apples, raised a child.*

THE XLII. CHAPTER.

A Gentleman that was a deere freind vnto the S. inuited him to dine att his house when his opportunity would best permitt. S. Francis answered that on such a day he would preach in his citty, and then he would satisfie his request. The day so much desired of the gentleman being come, hauing taken order in his house for the dinner, and left a seruant att home to that purpose, himselfe with his wife went to heare the sermon: but they being departed the seruant who also had chardge of a litle childe, said to her selfe: euery one runneth to heare this great S. of God, and is it possible that I alone must be barred from hearing him? verily I will heare att least a litle, and then will retourne before the rest in sufficient time to prepare my dinner: which she did, but hearing the sermon she remembred that she had left the litle child alone, wherefore she instantlieretourned home, and not finding the child where she had left it, hauing in vaine sought him euery where; and considering on the other side that her master would presentlie retourne, she went all weeping into the kitchen, where she found the child boiling in a pott of hott water ouer the fire, and thincking hastily to draw it out, she took it by the arme, but the arme comming from the body, she tooke out all the rest by morcells, and though she were extremely afflicted and as it were beside her selfe, neuertheles enforcing her selfe she fitted all the pieces together

together in a chest which she shutt vp, and then thought of dressing the dinner, till her master and mistresse came, to whome she related all, shewing them the child. The mother, whiles the S. according to his custome was in prayer, would haue fallen into extreme rage and lamentation but her husband of sound faith, remembring that he had the S. with him, who he knew to haue great credit with God: perswaded his wife to pacifie herselfe till S. Francis had dined, telling her, that she should haue time enough to lament afterward, if the diuine mercy did not assise the: that she should haue confidence in the S. and that she should see merueillous successe. So with an extraordinary constancie persferring their loue to S. Francis before that to their child, not to discontent him, they suppressed and concealed their interiour greife, & did eat with him with the greatest ioy they could. Now att the end of dinner, the holy Father S. Francis demaunded of the gentleman if he had a couple of apples, wherof he would gladly eat: who answered that he had none present, but would soone gett the. The S. replied that he would not any should goe out of the house for them, but willed that one should looke in that chest, pointing att that wherin were assembled the members of the dead child, and there should be found two: the gentleman hearing the chest nominated & knowing what was in it, was extremely agitated, & replenished with faith which God augmented in his hart, hoping that day to see some merueilles of the infinite bounty: he opened the chest where he found his sonne aliue and very well, holding two faire aples in his two handes, which he ioyfully brought to S. F. as if he had bin in a cradle: it may be imagined what ioy the Parentes conceaued to see their child aliue: they were so surprisid with this ioy, that being as it were beside the selues, they could not speake a word. S. F. recounted vnto them how in his prayer offered, God reuealed vnto him the death of the child caused by the deuill: the he exhorted the thenceforward to haue confidence in his diuine maiesty, as they had formerlie had; because faith wrought greater miracles then that, which being generally diuulged, caused many to lift their harts and handes to God. This history was painted in diuers places in memory of this great benefitt, and of the deuotion that many bare to the holy Father S. Francis,

Of an other child Which God rayfed by the merittes of the holy Father S. Francis, and of diuers other miracles wrought.

THE XLIII. CHAPTER.

BEing att an other time lodged with a knight, as they discoursed of spirituall matters, there came a seruant all chafed and full of teares, telling

telling this gentleman his master that his sonne was att that very houre drowned in a chanell: wheratt the Father and mother pittifully lamented. S. Francis was moued to cōpassion: and after that he had comforted the willing the to haue hope in God, he fell to prayer beseeching his diuine Maiesty to reueale vnto him the place where he might finde the child. Now God hauing reuealed it vnto him, he bad the gentleman to fend vnto such a place where he should finde his child, which being brought vtterly suffocated and drowned, he rayfed him an restored him to his Father in the name of God, with an infinite ioy to all the asstantes who redred thāckes incessantly vnto his diuine Maiesty. The holy Father S. Frācis minding to preach in a certaine place within the dioceffe of Cisterno, where a great nōber of people were assēbled to heare him, & waiting cōueniēt place to preach vnto the cōmodiously, by reaso that it was a plaine, he approached to an oake which was frō the bottome to the toppe all couered with antes, which the holy Father hauing seene he cōmanded the to goe frō that tree; and tounring to the people, he willed the to giue way to the said antes. And the, which was admirable, they in nōber almost incredible, went that way which S. Francis had caused the people to make for them, so that they neuer retourned more, and this was cause of vnspeakeable fruit. The holy Father S. Frācis of all other beastes had least affectiō to those antes, because they employed ouer much dilligēce in hoarding their prouisiō for the time to come. And withall he affirmed that they deserued not to be nombred with the birds of whome God said: Behold the foules of the aire, that they sow not, neither reape; nor gather into barnes: and your heauenly Father feedeth them. S. Francis would that all his Religious should haue the same faith and resignation of all their cogitations in his diuine prouidence, that God would should be in his disciples.

*The ants
obey S.
Francis.*

*Why S.
Francis
loued
not the
antes.
Matt. 6.*

In the same place and time that the S. preached, there happened a fearfull miracle, for there came a woman with a cow-bell to disturbe the company, wherwith she made such a ringing sound, that one could not heare what he said; S. Francis reprehending her, she encreased it, such possession had the deuill of her. Vpon this occasion, the holy Father inspired of God and moued with zeale of his holy word, and of the conuerfion of soules, vttered these wordes: Carry her away Satan, carry her away, for she is one of they members and is thine. O horrible and fearfull accident, these wordes being ended, the woman was incontinently carryed vp into the aire both body and soule in vew of all the world: for which cause euery one was stricken in extreme terrour and feare of the diuine maiesty, and thenceforward gaue eare to his holy worde in very great reuerence. S. Francis walking with his companion on the bankes of the riuer Po, and being ouertaken by the night

*The deuill
visibly
caried
away a
woman
for trou-
bling a
sermon
of S. Fr.*

he

he was exceedingly perplexed to get lodging, by reason that the way was extreme foule and durty, the aire very darck, and the place not free frō theeues; for though they had nothing to loofe, yet should they haue bin afflicted by them: wherefore his cōpanion said vnto him: Father pray vnto God, if you please, that he may voutsafe to be our guide: and to deliuer vs frō this affliction. The S. no otherwise answered but: God is able if he please, and that it be for our good to deliuer vs, and removing this darcknes to giue vs his light. Att this instant as he lifted vp his handes to heauen, a cleare light appeared, and so resplendant that being in all other places a very darck night, they saw very clearly and perfectly, nor only how to goe in their way, but euery where about the. So by this light guided and comforted both spiritually and corporally, they made such speed as they arriued att their place of retire, singing prayes and himnes vnto God, of whome S. Francis was assisted in his necessity. He accustomed when he came to any place to preach, thereby the more cōmodiously to assemble the people, to found a cornet which to that purpose he carryed with him with two stickes of a paulme long, which are to this day conserued in his church of Alsifum, in the sacristy, hauing the endes garnished with siluer: they are shewed with other reliques att all times when they are desired to be seene.

*God sent
a light
to enlighten
S. Francis
in a
darck
night.*

Certaine doctrines and discourse of the glorious Father S. Francis which haue bin found recorded.

Of the faith and reuerence due to the holy sacrament.

THE XLIV. CHAPTER.

THe holie Father saint Francis, did not onlie seeke to edifie his neighbour in corporall presence, and by example and preaching, but also such as he could not assist by those meanes being remote from them, he assisted by letters and aduertisements, which he caused his Religious to write, wherof I thought it requisite to select the choice and principall, to insert in this place, specified according to the contentes.

A letter of the holy Father saint Francis to all the Religious of the generall chapter.

IN the name of God, of the most sacred Trinitie and soueraigne vnitie, the Father, Sonne, and holie Ghost, Amen. To my beloued Brother the Minister Generall of the Order of Frere Minors,

V u 2

and

and to all other Ministers that shall succeed him, to all Provincials, Guardians and Preistes of our cōfraternitie, united in IESVS CHRIST, and to all the humble, simple, and obedient, first and last: Brother Francis, a man of nothing, fraile and infirme, your least seruant, saluteth you in the name of him that hath redeemed you, and hath washed vs with his owne blood, whose name we ought to adore prostrate on the earth, with great feare and reuerence. Most high lord IESVS CHRIST Sonne of God is his name, who is blessed for euer and euer. Amen.

*He ad-
uert-
sesh the
preists
of his
Order of
their
duety.*

Harken yee children of God, and my deere Brethren, imprint my wordes in your mindes, incline the eares of your harte, and obey the voice of the Sonne of God: keepe with all your hart and obserue his sweet preceptes, and embrace his counsailes with your entier will: praise him, for he is good, and know that the eternall Father sendeth you into the world, by your woickes and wordes to testifie his woickes and wordes. And therefore strue to make it knowne to all people, that he alone is almighty in all thinges, perseuer in his discipline and obseruance, and maytaine that which you haue promised him with a firme resolution, such he as Father to his children giueth vs the true preferuing nourishment of spirituall and corporall essence, and presenteth vs to his Father as our protectour: I beseech you my Brethren, euen humbly kissing your feet, and with the greatest charitie I can, I doe exhort you to reuerence and honour with your vtmost ability, the most sacred sacrament, whereby heauenly and earthlie matters are reconciled with God. I beseech all my brethren that are Preistes, and such as in the name of God shalbe, when they intend to celebrate the diuine masse, to be pure and neat, that they may worthelie offer the true sacrifice of the most sacred bodie and blood of our lord IESEVS CHRIST, with the greatest reuerence, puritie & holie intētion that they shalbe able, not for any humane respect, for any feare or loue; but that their intention be directed to God, desiring to please onlie his Maiestie, who sayth: Doe this in remembrance of me. Know then yee Preistes, that he who shall doe otherwise, shalbe like vnto Iudas. Remember the saying of the Apostle: A man making the law of Moyse frustrate: without any mercy dyeth vnder two or three witnesss. How much more thinke you, doth he deserue worse punishment which hath trodden the Sonne of God vnder foot, and esteemed the blood of the testament polluted, wherein he is sanctified, and hath done contumelie to the spirit of grace? For then is a man irreuerent and treadeth on that lambe of God, when, as the Apostle saith, he doth not examine and make a difference betweene this true bread of God, and that which he doth ordinarily eat, and therefore he receaueth it vnworthely. For God saith in Ieremie: *The*

Marc. 26

Heb. 10.

1. Cor. 11.

MAN

man is cursed that doeth negligently and feinedly. And the Preistes that will not haue this care to celebrate so excellent a Mystery, the most worthely that possibly can be, shalbe condemned of God, who saith: I will tourne your benedictions, to maledictions on your selues.

My brethren, heare me I pray you, if the glorious virgin be so much honoured (as she deserueth) for hauing receaued into her chaste wombe our lord IESVS CHRIST; If S. Iohn Baptist trembled, and durst not touch the head of IESVS CHRIST: and finally if the holy sepulchre, wherein IESVS CHRIST was buried, for his so small time of residence, is so much reuerenced; how much more ought he to be iust, holy, and well purged, who with his handes doth handle, and with his proper mouth doth receaue so high & infinite a Maiesty, and doth administer, the same to others? Remember that he is an immortall and eternall God, that liueth glorious and eternall; with contemplation of whose Maiesty the Angels themselues cannot be satisfied. Preistes know your dignitie, and be holy, for God is holy, and as in regard of so great a mystery and dignity you haue bin more honoured then other men; remember in like sort to be also more gratefull vnto God, and to reuerence, loue and honour him; for otherwise your misery is exceeding great, and deserueth continuall teares, in that you hauing in your handes the almighty God, the fountaine of all good thinges, you procure to haue transitory and terrestriall thinges, all the world ought to tremble with feare, and sweetly weepe, whiles the Angels themselues bend their knees, when IESVS CHRIST the Sonne of the most high is vpon the altare, betweene the handes of man. O merueillous highnes, and diuine debailement! O most high humility, that the Sonne of God, yea God himselfe, the master and lord of the vniuersall world should so humble himselfe, as to giue himselfe vnto vs, hidden vnder the forme of bread. Consider my brethren, so profound a humility, and purifie your hart before his diuine Maiestie, to the end he receaue all as he giueth himselfe to all. Therefore I aduertise you in the name of God, that in all places where the Religious are, you celebrate but one masse a day; and though you haue diuers Preistes, lett the rest be content to heare it: for although it be seene in many partes, yet is it one and indiuisible, and without any detriment, true God and true man, so in one sole masse, he can communicate his grace to all present and absent that make themselues worthy, one onlie and verie God, Father, Sonne, and holie Ghost, worcking this, Amen.

Iere. 48.

Malac. 2.

Lnc. 11

2. 11.

Matt. 3.

Esay. 11.

1. Pet. 1.

*Of the faith and knowledge of our Saviour Iesus Christ, and of the
sacred Sacrament.*

THE XLV. CHAPTER.

TO all Christians Religious, Ecclesiasticall, lay men and women that are in the world: Brother Francis their seruant and subiect in God, desireth withall reuerence a true peace in heauē, by the sincere charity which is discended on earth. As I am the seruant of you all, so am I obliged to serue all, and to administer vnto you the most sweet word of my lord and Saviour IESVS CHRIST: Considering therfore in my soule that by reason of the diuers infirmities that afflict my body I cannot by corporall presence as I desire, visitt you my selfe: I haue thought good to supply the same by letters, and by them to administer vnto you the worde of IESVS CHRIST, who is the word of the eternall Father, & the wordes of the holy Ghost which are spiritt & life. I then admonish you Brethren, to confesse your sinnes to a Preist, with all the dilligence you can possible, and at his hand to receaue the true body and bloud of IESVS CHRIST. For as our Lord saith: he that eateth not my flesh, and drincketh not my bloud cannot haue eternall life. Lett vs then endeauour worthely to receaue such & so eminent a maiesty: for he that receaueth it vnworthely, in steed of saluatiō pourchaceth death. Besides I exhort you often to visitt the holy churches, and to reuerence Preisttes, not so much in respect of themselues if they be sinners, as for reuerence of the function and dignity which they haue in being ministers of the most pretious body and bloud of our Saviour IESVS CHRIST, which by them is offered on the altare, receaued, and administered vnto vs, without which none can be saued: by the holy wordes which they vtter, and minister, he discendeth from heauen to earth, and none but they can doe it. O how happy and blessed are they who loue God withall their hart, with all their soules, and with all their forces, and their neighbour as themselues? I inuite you all my brethren, and you my sisters, to this loue: lett vs all with one accord loue God, & with one pure affection of our hart adore him, because that is the thing which he especially requireth and demaundeth of vs, as himselfe hath said: the true adorers adore in spiritt and truth; and it is necessary for them that adore him, to doe it in that manner. Our lord said to his disciples: I am the way & the verity, & the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me. If you had knowne me, my Father also certes you had knownen: & from hencefoorth you shall know him, and you haue seen him. Phillip said to him Lord shew vs the Father, & it sufficeth vs. IESVS said to him, So long time

*Of the
dignity
of the B.
Sacra-
ment of
the altare
& how
on ought
to reue-
rence it.
Ioan. 6.*

*Mat. 22.
Luc 10.*

Luc. 4.

Ioan. 14.

time I am with you: and haue you not knowē me? Phillip, he that seeth
 me, seeth the Father also. The Father dwelleth in a light inaccessible, & *Ioan. 1.*
 God is a spiritt, whome no man hath euer seene, because he is a spiritt,
 and therefore, inuisible, but in spiritt, considering that he is a spiritt most
 pure, for it is the spiritt that giueth life, and the flesh can doe nothinge.
 He may also be seene of euery true Christian, in the Sonne, in that sub- *Ioan. 6.*
 stance which is equall to the Father, and therefore all they that see our
 Lord IESVS CHRIST, according to the humanity, and not according
 to his diuinity, are condemned, as likewise are they who see the sacra-
 ment which is consecrated by the wordes of our Lord, on the altare, by
 the handes of the Preist, vnder the formes of bread and wine, and doe
 not see him and beleue in their spiritt, that it is the true and most sa-
 cred body and bloud of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, are con-
 demned, the souueraine Lord giueth his testimony against them when
 he said: This is my body and this is my bloud of the new testament, *Mat. 26.*
 which shalbe shed for you, and for many in remission of sinnes. He saith *Mat. 14.*
 in an other place: He that eateth my flesh and drincketh my bloud shall *Luc. 22.*
 haue life euerlasting. He that hath the spiritt of God, which dwelleth *Ioan. 6.*
 in his faithfull, he receaueth the most sacred bloud and body of IESVS
 CHRIST: and all other that haue not the same spiritt, yet neuertheles
 presume to receaue it, they eat and drinck their iudgement and damna-
 tion: therefore, yee children of men how long will you be sencelesse,
 and haue your hartes so hardened? When will you compasse to know
 the truth, and to beleue in the Sonne of God? who so humbly see-
 keth you euery day, as when he descended from his imperiall throne
 into the virginall wombe, he ordinarily commeth euery day vnto vs,
 in such humble manner attired and so approachable? He euery day
 descendeth from the bosome of his Father into the handes of the Preist
 on the altare, and as he was knowne vnto the holy Apostles in true
 flesh, in that very manner doth he communicate himselfe vnto vs in the
 holy Sacrament. And as they with their corporall eyes saw nothing but
 flesh, yet with their spirituall eyes, they knew him to be God: euen
 so we with our corporall eyes, seeing the accidentes of bread and wine,
 ought to see and firmly to beleue, that there is the most sacred bo-
 dy and true bloud of our Lord IESVS CHRIST on the altare. In this *Mat. 28.*
 manner is God alwayes with his faithfull, as himselfe hath said: I wilbe
 with you, euen to the consummation of the world.

of

Of love towards our neighbour, and how much the body is to be hated.

THE XLVI. CHAPTER.

THis thing may doubtles much confound vs, that making profession to be seruantes of IESVS CHRIST, and being certaine that his true freindes haue done may worckes that haue bin entierly deuout, vertuous and holy, we neuertheles content our selues with the only relation of them, and esteeme by the bare discourse therof without execution, to raigne eternally. Blessed is the seruant of IESVS CHRIST that loueth his Chrittian brother as much being sick as in health, and in aduersitie as in prosperity. Blessed is he that loueth and honoureth his Brother both farre and neere, that speaketh nothing in his absence, but what with great charity he may say in his presence.

Matt. 5. God said in the Gospell: loue your enemies and pray for them that hate and iniury you: He loueth his ennemie truely, that complaineth not of the iniuries which he hath receaued & doth receaue of him, but of the sinnes which himselfe hath comitted, and doth comitt against God and his soule, and also he that is not content to haue the loue of God in himselfe, if he doe not also make demonstration therof by the same worckes vnto his neighbour, and much more vnto his enemy. Blessed are the poore in spirit, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen. There are many that endure diuers afflictions in their bodyes, in prayer and good worckes, and that mortifie it with abstinence, and neuertheles for a slight word spooken against their liking, or for hauing something denyed them, they are incontinentlie scandalized and troubled. Such are not poore in spirit, though exteriorly they appeare so: for the true poore in spirit, misprize and abhorre themselues, and loue not only those that afflict and iniury them, but euen those that beat them. Blessed also is he that supporteth the infirmity and fragility of his neighbour, as he would be glad to haue his owne supported: My faithfull, lett vs loue our neighbour as our selues: and they who see they cannot loue them as themselues, lett them loue them as much as they can, or at least lett them not offend them. Lett vs hate and detest our peruerse willes: for as God saith, of our hart proceedeth all euils: this is to be vnderstood of him that applieth his hart, to satisfie his sensualityes. Many when they sinne or receaue any iniury, accuse their neighbour therof, which they should not doe: for each one hath his enemies, which is the body, with the senses therof, by which he offendeth. Therefore blessed is the seruant that hath such an ennemie in subiection, and so keepeth it vnder, and watcheth it with such prudence

Matt. 15.

dence that he hath no cause to feare it: for whiles he vseth this diligence, no other ennemy visible or inuisible can annoy him, nor procure him to sinne, in such sort that as S. Iohn Chrysostome saith: no man is hurt but of himselfe. We hate our body in as much as it will committ sinne: for liuing carnally, it seeketh to destroy the loue of God, together with the glory of Paradise, condemning it selfe and the soule perpetually to to hell; the greatest ennemy therefore that a man hath, is his proper flesh, which can thinck of nothing but that which offendeth it, nor feare ought in foresight of that which is eternally to befall it, the humour and desire therof is only to abuse temporall thinges: and the worst is, it vsurpeth to it selfe all contentment, and glory, euen of that which is graunted to the soule, not to it, for it seeketh the honour of vertues, of prayers, watchinges, and temporall fauour, it will haue applause of teares, in fine it leaueth nothing to the soule that apperteineth to her.

Of obedience.

THE XLVII. CHAPTER.

God said to Adam: Of euery tree of Paradise eat thou: But of the tree of knowledge of good and euill eat thou not: and whiles he obeyed God he offended not. But hauing transgressed this commandement, he was condemned of God for euer, till he was redeemed by the grace of his Sonne. That man doth eate of the forbidden apple of knowledge of good and euill, who appropriateth to himselfe, his owne will, and with his benefittes which God vttereth and worketh by him, doth exalte himselfe; therefore was he necessarily obliged to punishment. God saith in the gospel: he that loueth his life, shall lose it: and in an other place, he that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my discipule. He renounceth all that he possesseth, and looseth his soule, for the loue of God, who in euery thing submitteth himselfe to his Prelate: for by this meane, he may be tearmed truely obedient, and then also knowing he could doe some other thing better then that which he is commanded, and of more profitt to his soule, he sacrificeth his will vnto God; employing himselfe in that which he is commanded for the loue of God, though it be of lesse fruit: for true obedience, is full of charity, edifieth our neighbour, and entierly satisfieth God. But if the Superiour should command him any thinge in preiudice of his soule, then only he ought not to obey, but this case excepted, in althinges else, he must hold him his true Superiour: and if that other Religious persecute and afflicte him, because he obeyeth his Superiour; happy shall he be, for he may then truely say that God hath communicated vnto him his perfect

Gen. 2.

Ioan. 12.

Luc. 14.

perfect charity, which consisteth in enduring persecutions, and exposing his owne life for his neighbour. But the misery is, there are certaine Religious who whiles they would consider, and know whither certaine things by them inuented, be not better then those which the Superiours commaund them, the wretches doe not consider that they looke back, and retourne to the vomitt of their selfe-will; and so doe they ruine themselves and their neighbour by their euill example.

Of patience and humilitie.

THE XLVIII. CHAPTER.

THough there be nothing that ought, more to displease the true seruant of God then sinne, neuertheles if he fall into ouer-much passion, for any sinne whatsoeuer, his charity towards his neighbour excepted, he is guiltie of that sinne. Therefore the seruant of God which is not moued in such accidentes, may be truely said to be without passion; for his patience cannot be knowne while altitudes smiles vpon him, and succed according to his wish: But when occasion is presented wherein he desireth to be satisfied, and the contrary arriueth, then is his patience experienced, for he hath as much as he then sheweth, and no more. The holy Father S. Francis would say, that they were truely peaceable, who suffering in this world for the loue of God, conserue peace in their interior, and liue as Lambes among woulues. In which respect God himselfe liued and dyed so. Happy is he that being reprehended and accused of others, receaueth and beareth such reprehension charitably and patiently as of himselfe, and without exculsiue reply, consenteth with shame, confesseth with patience, and performeth due satisfaction courageously, yea euen in matters wherof he is guiltles, and being a subiect, persisteth vnder the rule of discipline, or being superiour, conuerseth with his subiectes as with his superiours. Happy is the seruant that incontinently correcteth and chasticeth his offences, interiorly by contrition, and exteriorly by confession and satisfaction.

A discourse which the holy Father S. Francis made to Brother Leo his companion, being in seruour of spirit.

BRother Leo my beloued sonne, note well these my wordes: Albeit the Frere Minors in whatsoeuer place they be, giue example of edification and sanctity, neuertheles consider prudently & seriously obserue that their perfect ioy consisteth not in that. Yea if they should

Should restore sight to the blind, health to the sicke, hearing to the deafe,
 speech to the dumbe, ability of goeing to the lame, should expell diuels
 out of bodies, and rayse the dead that had sauoured four dayes, their true
 alacrity consisteth not in all this. If they should vnderstand all the scrip-
 tures, could speake all tongues, should prophesie and know the confi-
 sciences of men, yet doth their true ioy lesse consist in this. Had they in-
 telligence to discourse of celestiall vertues, with the very tongues of
 Angels, as also of the course of the starres, of the proprieties of
 plantes and stones, were all the treasures of the world discouered
 vnto them, knew they the nature and vertue of fishes and other beastes,
 and also of men, their true ioy dependeth not thereon. Though they
 should preach with such seruour as to conuert all the Infidels to the faith
 of IESVS CHRIST, neither doth their true ioy consist in that.
 Brother Leo to all this answered: Wherin then consisteth it. S. Francis
 replied: Heare me Brother Leo: If we comming to our Lady of Angels
 by meane of a long iorney, very weary, wett with the raine, frozen
 with cold, dabled with durt, and extremely hungry, ringing att the
 gate, the porter vtterly disquieted and in collier should aske vs, who we
 were, and hauing answered him that we were Frere Minors and there-
 fore he should open vs the dore, he should reply: So farre are you from
 being any of ours, that you seeme two idle companions and rogues, that
 goe loitering about the world, robbing the poore of their almole, and
 do should not permitt vs to enter, but should make vs remaine till night
 all drowned and dagled with durt and rayne without giuing vs any
 comfort, and if that we support it patientlie for the loue of God, recea-
 uing all that from his holy hand, and confessing that the porter knew
 vs very well: Brother Leo writt that therein consisteth perfect ioy. And
 if being constrained by necessity, we continued ringing to enter, the
 porter should come forth in great choler against vs, and vse vs indis-
 creetlie and importunately, laying vnto vs: Get ye gone to the hospitall
 lewd and impudent fellowes as ye are, and stay no longer here for you
 shall not enter; if we support all this with alacritie, and pardon him
 with all our hart, therein consisteth perfect ioy. And being full darck night
 we being euery way molested, should begin againe to ring and knock, &
 weeping bitterlie should pray the porter to lett vs in for the loue of
 God, yet he more cruell then before should come out with a good cud-
 gell and load vs soundly with iniuries and bassinadoes, leauing vs in the
 durt rather dead then aliue: write, Brother Leo, that therein would consist
 perfect ioy: prouided that we support it all with great patience, that we
 pray God to pardon him, and that we loue him more, then if he had ope-
 ned the dore vnto vs for the loue of God, who hath endured much more
 for all vs.

*Wherin
 ought to
 consist
 the true
 spiritual
 ioy of a
 Frere
 Minor.*

Heare now the conclusion of all the graces of the holy Ghost which IESVS CHRIST hath graunted, doth, and euer will graunt to his elect. The principall is that a man doe conquere himselfe, and for his loue doe voluntarily supparte all kinde of iniuries and blowes euen to death: because indeed we cannot truely glory of any of the other foresaid vertues and graces, by reason that they are not ours, as the Apostle saith, but

1. Cor. 14 Goddes: What hast thou that thou hast not receaued? and if thou hast
Worthy receaued, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not receaued? wherefore
aduertis- we neither can nor ought the glory, but in the crosse of tribulations and
ment to afflictions, which is our owne: therefore the Apostle saith: I will glory
Superiours of only in the crosse of our Lord IESVS CHRIST: by which wordes is
the Frere sufficientlie explicated the sentence of God when he said: In your pa-
Minors. tience you shall possesse your soules. Our Lord God the soueraigne
Mat. 20. Prelat said: I come not to be serued but to serue: And therefore such as are
Luc. 21. constituted ouer others, ought to glory of such Prelature, as if they were
Gal. 6. constituted to wash the feet of the Religious. And when they are depri-
 ued their chardge, they ought no more to be greiued, then if were taken
 from them said office of washing the of feet: such as doe otherwise doe
 really appropriat to theselues this dignity in very imminent peril of their
 soules. That seruant of God then is happy, who esteemeth himselfe nei-
 ther greater nor better, for being honoured of men, yea no otherwise
 then if he were reputed amonge the most base and abiect; for so great, as
 he is before God, such is he, and no more. Wretched is the Religious
 who being rayled to dignity by an other, will not humble himselfe of
 his owne accord and of his owne will, happy is he that is exalted against
 his will, and not hauing procured it, and doth neuertheles desire to re-
 mayne alwayes in lowe estate and vnder the feet of his subiectes for the
 loue of God. Happy is he that is no more puffed in pride for the good
 which God doeth or speaketh by him, then of that which he doeth or
 speaketh by others. A man offendeth att all times and as often as he pro-
 cureth to haue more of that which is his neighbours, the to giue to God
 of what is his owne. We should neuer desire to be superiours and ouer
 others: but to be subiectes and seruanees of all creatures for the loue of
 God: and they who shall doe so, may assure themselves, that if they perse-
 uer to the end, the spirit of God will rest vpon them, and there will
 make his residence. Ye men, consider in what excellencie you haue ben
 created of God, who hath created and framed you after his owne ima-
 ge according to the soule and after th' image of his Sone according to the
 body, and yet all creatures are much more obedient vnto him then your
 selues. The deuils haue not crucified him, which thou being induced
 by them hast done, and dailie dost crucifie him by thy sinnes. Wherein
 then canst thou glory? miserable that thou art, if thou were indued
 with

with all kinde of science celestiall & terrestriall : the deuill hath knowne what appertaineth to heauen better then thou, and now though against his will, he knoweth more of earthly matters then all mankind together. There is no health, corporall disposition, nor beautie, comparable to that which the deuill had: Take heed therefore, least in abusing it, as he did, not acknowledging it to proceed of God but of himselfe, thou fall as he hath done into the extremest depth of hell. Happy is the seruant that treasureth vp, the riches his Lord and master hath giuen him, in heauen, and expecting the recompence therof, regardeth not to demonstrate them heere vnto men, but leaueth the cogitation therof to God himselfe, who when it shall please him will manifest it more then he would desire. Happy then is he, that keepeth and concealeth the secrettes of God in his hart.

*How Religious ought to behaue themselves in Oratories
and solitary places.*

THE XLIX. CHAPTER.

Lett those that desire to reside in solitary places, there to liue religiously and spiritually, be in number foure or more, wherof lett two be as mothers that haue two children, lett two act the life of Martha, and the others of Magdalen, and lett each one haue a cello, so that they neither sleep nor conuerse together but when they read their office. Lett them be carefull to say their Compline before the Sunne setting, that thence forward they may keep silence, till they arise in the night to say Mattins. Lett them in all things first seeke the glory and the kingdome of God, and his iustice: Lett them say the Prime *Matt. 6.* and Tierce att the ordinary houre, which done they may speake each to other of some matter of edification. Those said children as poore creatures shall demaund almosse of their mother for the loue of God: after that lett them say the Sixt, Ninth, and Euen song att their due houres: lett them permitt no person to enter into the Cloyster or enclosure where they reside, nor to eat there. The mothers shall labour to liue also sequestred from all conuersation, and with due obseruance of obedience to their Guardian, lett them permitt none to speake to their children, but their Guardian when he commeth to visit them. And lett the children sometimes for exercise of humilitie assume the office of Mothers according as the Guardian for their behoofe shall appoint, that so they may experience both the one and the other office. Happy is that seruant who hath no taist of any other thing then the word of his God, and by the same doth excite others to loue him.

him. Miserable is that Religious that taketh pleasure in idle and vaine wordes, for therbie enducing other to vanitie in imitation of himselfe, in steed of edifying his neighbour, he procureth his ruine.

Of the care which each one ought to haue of his owne saluation.

THE L. CHAPTER.

BRother I haue a secrett to open vnto thee. Each of you well knoweth, that we are the sonnes of the most high; but I now aduertise thee that more then children, we are also Spouses, brothers and mothers of IESVS CHRIST. Spouses when our soule by the vertue of the holie Ghost is vnited with God: Brothers, when we performe his will: we are Mothers when by loue we beare him in our hart, with a pure and sincere conscience: for we afterward bring him forth, both by the pious worckes which we performe, and by the example which we giue our neighbour. O my brethren, it is a glorious, admirable, and desireable thing to haue such a Spouse, Brother, & Sonne in heauen: And more then that, a Pastour who hath giuen his soule here on earth for vs his sheep, and who continually prayeth the eternall Father for vs, saying: Holy Father, keep them in thy name, whome thou hast giuen me, that they may be thine, and may be with me where I shalbe, that they may enioy my glorie and splendour in my kingdome. All they who liue not in penance, not being contrite, nor receaue not the sacred Sacrament, but liue in vices and finnes, and conceaue complacence in their pernicious desires, doe not performe vnto God what they haue promised: but doe serue the world with their bodies in carnalities, and the deuils with their soules, being deluded in their contentment by him whose children they are; Such people I say are blinded, and deprived of the true light of IESVS CHRIST, & haue not true knowledge: for they haue excluded from themselues the wisdom of the eternall Father IESVS CHRIST the soueraine verity, & though they seeme to see, know, & vnderstand, yet doe they neither see, know, nor vnderstand: for they doe voluntarie blinde and ruinate their owne soules. Open your eyes, then, blinded & deluded as ye are by your enemies, the flesh, the world, and the deuill. To the body it is a very delightfull thing to serue sinne, & very tedious to serue God: all euils and finnes proceed from the hart of mā, as God saith in the Gospell. The wicked haue no good in this world, nor shall haue in the next, they seeme att their pleasure to possesse the present vanities, but they are deceaued: for the time and houre will come, when they shall loose all.

The holy Father said also that one being knowne to be verie sicke the

Ioan. 17.

Matt. 15.

the first aduertisement of his kinred and freindes, is not to prouide for his soule, but to make his will, and so his wife, kinred and freindes gather about him, to induce him to be mindfull of them: And he ouercome by the teares of his wife, the tender loue he beareth to his children and the persuations of his kinred that seeme to haue forgotten his soule, disposeth of his substance according to their fancie to giue them content, and saith that he committeth to their gouernment and authority his substance, his soule and his body: that man is truly accursed who in this sort putteth his trust in man: conformable to what the Prophett Ieremie said: Cursed is the man that trusteth in man. Now after such disposition the Confessour is sent for, who finding the wretch obliged to some restitution, soliciteth him to discharge himselfe therof, but he answereth that he hath made his testament, disposed of all his goodes, and deliuered it into the handes of his heires, who will satisfie whatsoever shalbe necessary, and because he is in agonie and hath almost lost his speech, there is no time to dispose of matters necessarie to the discharge of his conscience, and so he dyeth a most miserable death. Therefore lett euery one know, that when and howsoever a man dye in mortall sinne, and without due restitution of an other mannes goodes, hauing power to doe it before his death, the deuill carryeth his soule directlie to hell, where he shalbe eternallie tormented, and so in an instant he looseth bodie and soule, goodes and honour; because his kinred diuiding his inheritance among them, they often curse his soule, for not hauing left to one of them, what he hath left to all.

Of the contrarietie of vices and vertues, and certaine breife aduertisements and exercises of them.

THE LI. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis affirmed, that where true charity is, there can neither be feare nor ignorance; Where there is a ioyfull and voluntarie pouerty there is neither enuy nor auarice; where there is Meditation of God, there is no care: where the feare of God is keeper of the house, there the deuill cannot enter; where there is discretion and mercy, there is neither superfluity nor deceit. Now I tell you there is no man in the world can in any sort haue one of the said vertues, If he doe not first die to himselfe, and he that really possesseth one hath all: with that one, he erreth not in the rest, and he that erreth in one, erreth in all the other, and is in that case as if he had not any; they are of such valew, that each one of
itselfe

it selfe confoundeth vices and sinnes: holie wisdome confoundeth the deuill with all his malices: holy simplicitie confoundeth the prudence of the deuill, the world, and the flesh: holy pouertie confoundeth enuie, auarice, and secular desires: holy humilitie confoundeth pride, with all worldly honoures, and what soeuer is in them: holy charity confoundeth all diabollicall and carnall temptations and pleasures: holy obedience confoundeth all naturall will and sensuall affection, subiecteth the body to obedience of the spiritt, rendreth and maketh a man humble and subiect, not only to all men, but euen to other unreasonable creatures. The Apostle saith: the letter killeth but the spiritt giueth life: they are killed by the letter, who seeke to know only, to be reputed learned and wise of the world: by this meane to purchase honours and riches, with anxiety to aduance their kinred and freindes: and in a word, not for themselves, but for the body or for others. And they are quickened of the spiritt, who referre all the learning and knowledge they haue, and desire to haue, only to the prayle and honour of the diuine maiesty, and who appeare before God, by the example of their life, and with wordes full of edification, offering vnto him that goodnes which is entierlie his owne. In this sort it is, that the seruant of God may know if he really haue his spiritt: for if the flesh glorie in the workes it doeth, by meane of the grace of God as its owne, it is then a signe that he is of the deuill: But if in the said workes, he neuertheless repute himselfe vile, and acknowledge himselfe a most greiuous sinner, he is then truly of God, and God is in him: Happy is the seruant that neither speaketh nor doeth any thinge, for hope of recompence in this world, but for the loue of God, nor lightly speaketh, what commeth to his mouth, but prudently and in due time, disposeth his propositions and answaeres. Wretched also is the Religious that buryeth in his hart the graces which he receaueth of God, or that communicateth them for subiect of vaine glorie, desiring rather to manifest them verballie then to God; for he hath already receaued his reward, and they who haue heard him, haue bin little edified thereby. These are wordes of life, and he that shall ruminate and accomplish them, shall finde true life, and in the end obtaine saluation of God. They that seeke not to tast how sweete God is, and that loue darcknes more then light, neglecting to obserue the commandementes of God, are by his Prophett accursed of him, who sayeth: Cursed are they who erre from thy commandementes: but how blessed and happie are they that loue God, and performe the saying of the gospell: Thou shalt loue thy Lord thy God, with all thy hart, with all thy soule, and withall thy will: Lett vs therefore, My Brethren, loue and prayle God day and night,

1. Cor. 3.

Psal. 118.

Mat. 22.

night: Our Father which art in heauen, because it is necessary to pray al-
 wayes, without intermission: and lett vs haue charity and humility, Luc. 18.
 and doe almose doedes, that they may cleanse our loules from spot-
 tes of sinne, for euerie thing appertayning to the world tourneth to
 ruine, men must leaue it, and carry with them onlie the recompen-
 ce and reward of charitie and the almose they haue done, wherof
 they shall receaue recompence of God: And therefore it is good to
 fast from vices and sinnes, flying all occasions of them, and to
 keepe vs from all kinde of superfluitie, though lawfull, and we must
 frequent churches, and honour Preistes, in respect of the dignity
 they haue with God: and especiallie the Religious that haue re-
 nounced the world, to doe more good then others, and by their
 example we also must renounce it, if not entierlie, att least in part.
 Lett vs loue our ennemies, and doe good to them that hate vs: lett
 vs obserue the preceptes and counsailes of our Sauour I E S V S
 C H R I S T, renouncing our selues, and liuing vnder the sweet
 yoke of his obedience. Lett vs not be wise according to the flesh,
 but simple, humble, and pure, keeping our senses mortified, and pri-
 de trodden vnder foot, considering our basenes vnworthie to be su-
 perieur to others as they would we should be. Lett vs imitate our
 Lord, and carry his crosse vpon vs, lett vs suffer together with him, who
 hath endured so much for vs wretches in this world, and bestoweth on
 vs so many benefittes, and far greater will hereafter, and to whome all
 creatures ought to giue prayse, honour, and glorie in heauen, in earth,
 in the sea, and in the depth, because he is our vertue and our force, who
 only is good, only most high, onlie almighty, meruaylous and glorious,
 and only holy, praysed and exalted for euer Amen. I Brother Francis
 your seruant with the greatest humilitie I can, prostrate on the earth
 and kissing your feet, doe beseech you by the bowels of the cha-
 ritie of God, to receaue these wordes and others of our Lord I E-
 SVS CHRIST, to effect and obserue them with due humilitie and cha-
 ritie, assuring all them, that shall receaue, vnderstand, and effect them, and
 shall by wordes and example teach them to others, therein perseuering
 to the end, that the Father, the Sonne, and holie Ghost, will giue him
 his benediction. Amen.

*Of the conditions and qualities in a true Frere Minor, taken out of
 the 10. chapter and 10. booke, and placed here
 as in their due place.*

THe holy Father S. Francis as a good pastour, and zealous of
 the profit and releife of his sheepe in Euangelicall perfection,

Y y

confi.

considered often with himselfe, what conditions ought to be in a true and perfect Freer Minor. Our Lord hauing reuealed vnto him the perfections of many of his interiour freindes and first disciples, in whome he made appeare singuler graces, he, vnitng them all together, in this sort framed a Frere Minor: Lett him haue the faith and loyaulty of Brother Bernard Quintaualle, who had also a most perfect obleruance of pouerty, as in his life shall appeare: the simplicitie and purity of Brother Leo: the good manners and good nature of Brother Angelus of Riete, who being in the world, was a right worthy and cōpleate knight: the gracious countenance, naturall science, and deuout speech of Brother Macie: the soule eleuated in contemplation as Brother Giles: the perseverant prayer of Brother Ruffinus, who prayed without intermission; though he were employed in other affaires: it seemed euen when he slept that his soule was with God: the patience of Brother Iuniperrus, who desired nothing more then to endure and be contented: the Fortitude of Brother Iohn des Landes, a man of notorious courage and extreme abstinence: the Charitie of Brother Roger, and the care of Brother Lucidus, who was so sollicitous of soule, that when he felt consolation in one place, he would repaire to another, to auoyd the setting of his loue in this world: wherupon he would say, that one must dwell as in an inne, with the foot euer readie to putt into the sturup, to prosecute the iorney to heauen.

The end of the doctrines.

Of certaine Miracles wherby our lord confirmed the life and holy doctrine of his Preacher S. Francis.

THE LII. CHAPTER.

*S. Francis
obtaind
raime by
prayers.*

*The frog-
ges obey
him.*

THere happening an extreme drinelle att Beneuentum for want of rayne, and wheras euery one expected and feared a great dearth, the holy Father S. Francis arryued there, and hauing preached and being enformed of their affliction, he commaunded each one to say a *Pater noster* and *Aue Maria*: which done, it rained very abundantlie. Preaching an other time in a church, neere vnto a pond where were manie frogges, which by their croakinges hindred the people from hearing him: the holie Father commaunded them to be silent, and they in such sort obeyed him that retourning thither an other time, and knowing that they had not croaked from the

the time of the said prohibition, he gaue them licence to vse their naturall voice, which att the verie instant they began to doe. There being a generall procesion made in a place called Arona, for an extreme drinelle which they endured; sainct Francis comming thither, began to preach vnto them publikelie in the middes of a feild in the violent scorching sunne, whither (to the end he and his audience might not be molested) our lord sent such a number of swallows, that remayning in the middes of the aire, they couered the multitude from the beames of the sunne, and stirred not thence till sainct Francis had ended his predication. Preaching att Albruzzo in a church of the Virgin Marie, to excite the people more seriously to obserue the word of God, there being presented vnto him a child that was crooked, lame and mute, called Albertus Campoly, he with his verie handes streightned his crookednesse and his other maymed members, which obeyed him as if they had consisted of soft waxe, and composed euerie part according to their nature: then calling him, he made him answere, and of that answere followed his speech, so that he deliuered him perfectly cured vnto his Father, who with verie great faith expected the successe, wherevpon he with all the people were inflamed in the true loue of God, and yelded infinite thanckes to his diuine Maiestie. He cured a dangerous wound in a yong man by the signe of the crosse in the cittie of Castello, whither he was brought with great faith, that he might signe him with the said signe, so that the next morning, the flesh being growen where before it was putrified, the cicatrice remayned vermillion like a rose, in perpetuall memorie of the miracle. When the Monasterie was builded for his Religious att Ancona, the worckmen wanting wine they murmured, and would no longer labour: but sainct Francis hauing made his prayer, went to a neighbour fountaine, the water wherof, by the signe of the crosse which he made thereon, he touned into wine, then made the labourers to drinke, whome he made penitent of their concealed impatience. A gentleman visiting the holie Father in the Church of sainct Christopher att Iterrena, and hauing inuited him to eat with him, it happened that there was no wine in his house, sainct Francis then commanded a botell of vinegar to be drawne, and it was seene and knowne to be most precious wine. In the same cittie, a wall being fallen vpon a yong man, that was found dead vnder the stones, whiles he was lamented in his Fathers house, sainct Francis hauing compassion therof and inspired of God, entered in att a back dore, and approching to the beare that was vncovered; (for in Italy the body is carried to buried clothed as

*Swallows
couers
the hearers
of his sermon.*

*He cureth a
crooked
lame &
mute
child.*

*A mortal
wound.*

*He converted
water
into wine.*

*He also
converted
vinegar into
wine.*

*He raised
one
dead.*

Prelates are here) he tooke the dead by the arme, and calling him by his name, he raised him, no otherwise then if he had awaked him from sleep, and at the verie instant he prophesied that he should liue and haue no children by his wife, which came so to passe, and all this was assured to Pope Nicolas the third by autenticall testimonie that was produced before notaries.

Of the exercises of the holy Father S. Francis: and of the lent he kept on the lake of Perusia.

THE LIII. CHAPTER.

THe glorious S. after he was conuerted to God neuer remayned idle: for he alwayes endeaoured to be employed in some action, in example of Iacobs ladder, wher on the Angels ceased not to mount and descend, receauing and carrying the pious workes of the children of God to the soueraigne Father: so the S. by contemplation mounted towards God, and by pietie and preaching discented to his neighbour: thus did he employ all his time which had bin giuen him of his diuine Maiestie to meritt in the pious workes which the holie Ghost did distat vnto him. Now the time of one of his lentes being come wherin as a carefull bee, he collected the fruites and flowers of God by meane of prayer, therof to compound the delicious honie of predication, wherwith he might refectionat the hungrie children of the word of God, he resolved to seeke out a place where he might performe the same commodiouslie, solitarie and without any impedimēt; to this purpose on Shrouetuesday he wēt vp to the lake of Perusia; where a freind of his lodged him on the side of the lake, whence the next morning he gott himselfe to be conducted in a barge to the Island that is situat on the said lake then vnhabited, with two litle loaves to sustaine him during the said lent, he coniured his freind not to speake therof to any person, for so much as he would not therein trust any of his Religious nor hauing for that time taken any companion, and enioyned his said freind not to come for him till Maundie or holie thursday. Being then discented into this Ile, himselfe made a litle cottage of bowes of trees, where he resided all the lent in continuall and holie contemplation and conuersation with God, the Angels, and blessed Saintes. On holie thursday his freind comming earlie vnto him reconducted him to the Couent, where he would communicate with all his disciples and wash their feet: he restored a loafe and halfe to his freind, of the two which he had giuen him, the other halfe it is credible he did eat to obserue humane fast, or not to giue subiect of vaine glorie to the

*S. FRANC.
did eat
but halfe
a loafe
in the
whole
lent.*

the deuill, and not to equall himselfe to his God, though God alone doth know, and his seruant sainct Francis, who would neuer reueale it to anyman, the combates he had during that lent, against the inuifible ennemies, & the glorious graces he obtayned; Afterward God voutsafed in some sort to reueale them, working in that place manie miracles, by the merittes of the Sainct, whervpon the ile began to be inhabited, and there was erected a Couent of Frere Minors which is exceedingly reuerenced in memory of the said miracle.

Of the lent of S. Michael which he kept on the Mount Aluerne.

THE LIV. CHAPTER.

THe yeare of grace 224. two yeares before the death of this glorious Father, some dayes before the natiuitie of the Virgin Marie, he repayred to the Oratorie of Mount Aluerne, there to keep his lent that began the day after the said feast of the Virgin Marie, & continued til the feast of S. Michael the Archâgel, according to his perticuler deuotion, where he shutt himselfe into a celle, sequestred from all others. The first euening that he entred there, he demaunded this grace of God, that he would please to reueale vnto him in what he should serue him that lent, as he accustomed to doe, for he gouerned him in althings according to the will of God, and not according to his owne. Now in the morning about the breake of day S. Francis arysing from prayer, there incontinentlie flocked a great number of birdes that began to sing one after an other and hauing lung, they tooke their flight and left the Sainct contented: In that instant he heard a voice that said: Francis, let this be a signe of a notable fauour which God intendeth to shew thee in this place. By which voice his hart was so altered that thence forward he felt a great quantitie of spirituall giftes in his interieur, God continuallie visiting him, and remaying there, he burned with an ineffable flame of his loue, and therefore, he was often in his contemplations eleuated so high, that as Brother Leo recounted who was then his companion and a curious obseruer of all his actions, he could not discerne nor comprehend him with his sight, surpassing the high cloudes of heauen; which is not ouer-greatly to be admired, considering that in this world he led a life more angelicall then humane. He, as he afterward recounted to his companions, there demaunded as a singuler grace of his God, to be entierlie transformed into his anguishes and dolours, sith his Maiestie had not voutsafed to accept of his life, which so manie times he had offered vnto him, as the onlie thing he had to offer, hauing no other thing in this world,

and hauing so often gone among the infidels there to receaue Martyrdome in the seruice of his diuine maiesty: Wherefore it was incontinent: lie reuealed vnto him of God, that as he had alwayes endeauoured perfectly to follow and imitate his life, and actions, so should he be permitted to be like vnto him, and to suffer with him in the dolours, of his passion. Which the holy Father vnderstanding, albeit he were already exceedingly weakned, by the rigour of his life past, and by the continuall crosse with he had carryed, yet he was so farre from being troubled with all, that he encouraged himselfe, and enamoured himselfe the more to suffer a Martyrdome so noble and worthy. about all others, and by the interiour burning flame he extinguished the water of all the afflictions and dolours that euer could befall him, and desired no lesse perfection, to receaue in himselfe so inestimable a treasure.

How S. Francis receaued the sacred Stigmates of our Lord Iesus Christ.

THE LV. CHAPTER.

THe most feruent Father S. Francis being thus highly eleuated in God, by an extreme ardor of celestiall desires, and transformed into IESVS CHRIST, crucified for our sinnes, by sweetness of compasion on the day of the exaltation of the holy crosse, which is the fourteenth of September, a litle before the breake of day, there appeared vnto him this vision following: He saw an Angel descend from heauen like vnto the Seraphin with six wings in the Prophett Esay, enflamed with a most resplendant fire, whose beames were so glittering, that to humane eyes they were insupportable. This Angel approaching vnto the S. being already in the region of the aire so neere vnto him that he might see him, there stayed: and then the S. beholding him more attentiuely saw the image of IESVS CHRIST crucified imprinted in him, which had the two wings crossed on high, as were those belowe, so that the endes of those vpper passed the hight of the head, & those below passed the soles of the feet, & the other two passed on each side the endes of the fingers & handes, the two armes being stretched in forme of a crosse. The soule of S. Francis was with this admirable apparition exceedingly melted, being surprised with a contentment & an extreme greife entermingled so together, that it was impossible to explicate, whither of the two were greater, for on the one side he exceedingly reioyced, beholding himselfe in the mirour, wherein the Angels themselves cannot be wearie to looke, and wherein are enclosed the

the treasures of all beautitude, and keeping his eyes alwayes more fixed on that celestiall fiery globe, shining with a diuine light, he consumed with loue and sweetnes: but on the other side, considering his God so cruelly fastened on the crosse with hard and grosse nailes, as he then appeared vnto him, and hauing his side opened with the stroke of a lance, he by commiseration experienced that cruell iron, which pearced the delicate breast of the Virgin Mary, in such sort that he no lesse felt that dolour, then if himselve had bin crucified in that manner, yea by his interiour compalsion he was fullie transformed into his beloued IESVS CHRIST. No man can doubt hereof, sith this vision was not as others, appearing only to the exterior eyes, but it was effectiue and operatiue by an act not heard of, in the verie bodie of his Saint, imprinting in him the verie woundes which he had, by meanes of his diuine beames, which from his two handes, his two feet, and side, he sent into his handes, feet, and side, not spirituallie, or imaginatiuelie only, but sensiblie and corporally, opening his side, and pearcing his handes and feet; and this was not only for the present, but for an eternall testimonie he left him the nailes framed of his verie flesh fixed therin, the heades of the nayles lardge appearing without in the paulmes of his handes, but round and of iron colour, and on the other sides the pointes clinched, for the woundes were transpearced through both sides, so that att the principall wound, wherby the handes were pearced from one side to an other with the said nayles, on the side where the pointes of the nayle was clinched, there was such a space betweene the superiour part of the hand, and the tourned clinch of the nayle, that betweene the same one might putt in a finger; the like might be said of the feet: so that thenceforward he could not stand vpon them but with extreme paine; in such sort that besides the incessant running of the blood, it was verie troublesome vnto him; as also was the wound of his side which was verie lardge and open, the flesh being there growen againe in forme of a cicatrice, which was of the colour of a rose, as it was seene after ward by diuers, hauing touched the same, as in place conuenient shalbe inserted. Our soueraigne Lord and God, leauing in the body of his seruant, a liuely, true, and long memoriall of his dolorious Palsion, not without a most profound iudgement, and immensiuie signe, of an excessiue loue vnto vs, for seeing that the memory of his bitter palsion was viterly extinguished in our harts, he would not this other misterious palsion, for our cause only, renewed in the body of his seruant, should be so soone forgottē. In which respect it was necessary that he should endure it, not one houre or two, one day or a month, but two yeares entierly, the hard
obli-

obstinacie, and obstinate hardnes of our hartes opposite and rebellious to his diuine Maiestie, so requiring it to procure vs with efficacie to remember the other.

How the glorious Father saint Francis was at length constrained to reueale the impression of his stigmates, to such as were most familiar vnto him.

THE LVI. CHAPTER.

Now after this admirable cōmunication, performed with such and so great a prerogative as a greater could not be imagined, the altare enkindled in the brest of the holie Father, burned with the immensue charitie he had vnto his God; but leauing this to the deuout soules, that raise themselues from the earth towards their Creatour, we will prosecute the historie, telling how he discovered this treasure vnto the world. Saint Francis then hauing finished his lent which he fasted in the honour of saint Michal the Archangel, and hauing giuen thanckes to God, he descended to the foot of the Mountaine, carrying with him the diuine image of IESVS CHRIST crucified, not in tables of stone or wood carued and engrauen by the hand of some humane or Angelicall Master, but written and imprinted in the membres of his proper flesh, by the handes of the Sonne of God himselfe, not casting his precious stones before euery body; because he feared much to manifest to little purpose so great a secret of God; yet withall he found it impoossible to conceale the same, at least from his companions, that were hourly with him; therefore calling them together, he proposed vnto them his doubt, as in a third personne, not specifying the fact, but only speaking generally of the reuelations of the secrettes of God. But Brother Illuminato, truly illuminated of God, ayming att that which proued true, that Saint Francis had receaued of God some reuelations of very great importance, especially perceauing him to be as out of himselfe, he thus answered: Beloued Father, who knoweth better then your selfe, that for the most part, and almost alwayes God giueth great reuelations to his seruantes not for themselues alone, but for others also, as hath bin seene that it hath pleased him at length to manifest them all? Wherefore it seemeth to me that you hauing receaued such, should proue ingratefull to God if you conceale that which he hath wrought in you more for the saluation of the world, then for your owne particuler, thereby burying his talent vnder the earth. Which the holy Father vnderstanding, as from the mouth of God, besides what he often said with the

Pro-

Prophet: My secrett vnto my selfe, my secrett vnto my selfe, he very *Esay. 6.*
humbly recounted vnto them the vision he had, the successe thereof, &
many other most high and diuine matters, vnder the seale of secretesie,
which is not to be doubted but God did reueale vnto him in so merueil-
lous a coniunction.

How his sacred woundes were scene of diuers during his life.

THE LVII. CHAPTER.

BVt it being impossible for the holy Father to conceale this light
with God would haue to shine to all the world, on an high
candlestick: though he could couer his feet with his sandales
when he would, and his handes with the sleeues of his habitt; yet he
was constraigned in the end to manifest them. Brother Leo his Con-
fessour, saw them euery day, the holy Father being of necessity to vse
him, as a Phisition, to dresse his holy stigmates, whence did continually
distill bloud, and to change the linnen and putt tentes betweene the
nailes and flesh with incredible paine and patience of the holy Father.
Neuertheles, he would not haue them touched on the friday, because
he would endure the more, and so suffer with his Sauour. Brother
Ruffinus, who as S. Francis affirmed was already for his sanctity of
life canonized in heauen, hauing many times scene the woundes of
the handes and feet of the S. desired also very earnestlie to see that of
his side wherof he held himselfe as fully assured, by washing his lin-
nen bretches, which he alwayes found embrued with bloud on the
right side, and annoynting his stomack with oyntmentes, insinuating
himselfe and thrusting his hand farther then he needed, did often touch
it with his fingers, and sometimes the S. felt much greife thereby; ne-
uertheles he had a verie extreme desire for his consolation to see it: And
therefore one day, faigning to request the holy Fathers habitt, of deuo-
tion to chaunge it for his owne, and requiring it for the loue of
IESVS CHRIST, he so wrought, that the S. who could not deny
any thing that was demaunded him in the name of God, not suspec-
ting any other thing, putting off his habitt to giue him, he contented
him therein though he did his endeaour to hide the same. S. Clare
that made him many plaisters for dressing therof, deferred to see
them, the S. shewing them all vnto her, in regard that she was
such an Espouse of IESVS CHRIST as each one knoweth, in his life
and the eldest daughter in God of the S. The said plaister is with
great reuerence shewen for a relique in the Couent of S. Clare at
Assisium. The Cardinal of Hostia, Protectour of the Order, saw
them

*Brother
Leo and
Br. Ruf-
finus, S.
Clare,
the Car-
dinal
protector
and the
bishop
Vgolino,
saw the
holy styg-
mates &
woundes
of S. Fr.
in his life
time.*

them also, and many personnes deuoted and affected vnto him, as the bishop Vgolino and others.

*How God by many miracles published the Sacred stigmates of his
seruant S. Francis.*

THE LVIII. CHAPTER.

*The water that
issued out
of the
stigmates
of S. Francis.
cured
cattell
infected
with the
plague.
An ordi-
nary te-
pest that
destroyed
all fruit
neere the
Mount
Aluerne
ceased
after S.
Francis.
had there
receaued
the stig-
mates.
S. Francis.
With his
hand tou-
ching a
man that
was ex-
trem cold
did warme
him.*

THe same God that had imprinted the sacred stigmates in his seruant for the good of the world, would not haue them buried in silence; but did miraculously manifest them, as to his maiestie seemed conuenient, which he did, as well for his owne glorie, as for the benefit of faithfull soules, who seeing his sacred woundes in his seruant, encreased in faith, and glorified the author of them in his saint. There raigning a great pestilence among the cattell of the Country of Riete, which procured their death, notwithstanding any remedy that could be inuented; God reuealed vnto a deuout person that he should procure to gett of the water that fell from the handes of his seruant Francis, when he washed them; and therewith should sprinkle the cattell, and so they should be cured: The man fearing God, went and gott of the said water, and with faith experienced the application, and all the cattell that were touched therewith, though halfe dead, arose sound and secure on their feet. Before S. Francis had the stigmates, there arose euery yeare a cloud, with a tempest neere the Mount Aluerne, that destroyed all the fruit of that place: But after he receaued them, that tempest neuer appeared which procured great admiration to all the world. Being one time accompanied with a poore man, himselfe riding on an asse, by reason that the woundes that were vnder his feet hindered his goeing, the night hauing surprised them, they retired themselues vnder the couerture of a mountaine, where the poore man, for the extreme cold which he felt could not sleep, and tounring himselfe from one side to an other, did nothing but sigh and lament: Whereof the holie Father hauing compasfion, touched him with one of his sacred handes, and the poore man in steed of the bitter cold which he felt, incontinentlie found himselfe so exceeding hoate, that he seemed to be in a stoue or hoate house, where he sweetlie slept till the morning, and afterward affirmed that in al his life he neuer slept better. A woman of Arrezzo had so dangerous a labour that she was abandoned of the phisicians, and the health of her bodie being desperate, there was no care but of her soule: it happened by chaunce that the asse wheron S. Francis had ridden was brought to drinck neere vnto the house of the said woman, which her kinred knowinge, they tooke of the

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the bridle, which S. Francis sitting on the asse had held in his handes, & hauing with great faith girded the woman therewith, she was presently without danger deliuered. God wrought such miracles during his life, that by them it might appeare that his sacred stigmates were truly workes of his omnipotent hand; but he made it much more apparent after his death, as here ensuying shalbe declared, though they happening afterward seeme not conuenient to be written as yet, neuertheles I doe it that the matter may be seene well vnited together.

*Of the testimonies of the woundes of the Seraphicall Father S. Francis,
by the holy Apostolicall sea.*

THE LIX. CHAPTER.

Pope Gregorie the ninth, himselfe saw and touched the handes and feet of the glorious S. and because he saw not that of the side he had no great beleife therof; Wherefore some time before he canonized S. Francis, one night in his sleep, as himselfe often affirmed, the S. appeared vnto him as in choller, and reprehending him of his slender faith, lifted vp his right arme, and shewed him the wound of his side: then demaunding a cuppe it seeming to his Holynes that he deliuered him one, it was presently filled with blood. By this apparition, he afterward remayned assured of the wound, which he so reuerenced that being vnable to endure the enuie and lewdnes of some that impugned the same, struiuing to darcké the glory of so singuler a miracle, he commanded by the first bulle he published, that this truth should be beleueed, as affirmed by Apostolicall sentence. The bulle beginneth: The glorious Confessour: then afterward he saith: We by the tenour of these presentes declare vnto all people, that the stigmates of this glorious S. hauing in his life time and after his death bin seene in his body, the same hath bin approued with his other miracles, by our venerable Brethren, the Cardinals of the holy Church: wherefore we haue had iust occasion to enrole him in the catalogue of SS. And because in the beginning of this veritie there were two ecclesiasticall personnes that publicquely declared themselues aduersaries to the said stigmates, one of who was Brother Euerard, an Alleman Preacher, who in his sermons auouched that he neuer had those woundes: and the other was the Archbishop of Colleigne, who commanded the said stigmates to be putt out of his image; the said Gregorie the ninth, made and sent two breuies against them, the one of which being directed to the Prouincials and Priours of the Order of Preachers was such, Gregorie Bishop: we hauing heard with no lesse greife then meruaile,

A woman being in extreme dangerous labour was deliuered by holding the bridle which S. F. did ride with all.

Pope Gregory by a bulle assureth and confirmeth the truth of the stigmates

that a Religious of your Order, named Euerard, not remembreing that the sermons of Preachers ought to be seasoned with the salt of grace; being att Copania, a citty of Morauia, of a Preacher becomming a blasphemers, was not ashamed to affirme that the stigmates of the holie seruant of God Francis, that were so miraculously by diuine Maiestie imprinted on him, were fables, and ought to be reprocued; what could he say more? He att one same time depriued the holie seruant of God, of his honour and glorie; yea God himselte, who by a singuler priuiledge and excellent mysterie gaue him those signes, and hath depriued vs of auctoritie and dew respect, considering that he hath presumed to impugne our auctoritie; for we haue approued the said stigmates; not onlie ashaueing heard relation therof by personnes worthie of credit, and bin assured therof by verie authentically written testimonies; but ouer selues also haue seene them with our proper eyes, and touched them with our verie handes, Now we vnderstand that the said Religious is mounted to such audacitie; as he presumeth to preach publikelie, to the dishonour of the Religious Frere Minors, baptising them before the people with the false name and title of dore-begging preachers and lyers, adding that they ought to be preuented and excommunicated. All these thinges considered, we command you in vertue of this present Apostolicall Breuie, to suspend the said Religious from the facultie of preaching, in what place soeuer he shall appeare, and vsing all meanes to gett him into your handes, you shall incontinentlie send him vnto vs; that we may inflict on him the punishment due to his desert.

*Plus vniu-
oculatus,
quam de-
cem au-
riti.*

The other Breuy that was directed to the Arch-bishop of Coileigne was thus: The diuine wisdom; that first framed man according to his flesh to redeeme him, by the mystery of his holy Incarnation; he also hath adorned his seruant Francis with the same woundes, & that it is so, we with the Colledge of our venerable brethren the cardinals haue approued the same, haueing bin assured therof by diuers personnes of vertuous life, and haue our selues seene very authentical testimonies therof: and besides we haue bin induced by our selues, that haue with our owne eyes seene, and touched them with our owne handes. For which respectes we haue really and with iust reason concluded, that it ought to be held for truth: wherefore we command you that vnderstanding this our intencion and probation of them, you also publikelie approue them, and not to permitt any within your diocese to contradict them. Pope Alexander the fourth that saw them, made also a Breuie in approbation of them, and commanded the Frere Minors neuer to leaue the Oratorie of Mount Aluerne, whe-

*Pope A-
lexander
the 4. did
as much.*

re their holie Father had receaued so singuler a gift of God. Pope And Po-
 Benedict the second, ordayned by a Breuie that the Frere Minors pe Bene-
 should celebrate the feast, and say the office of the said sacred stig- didt the
 mates of the glorious Father saint Francis: All which testimonies, 2.
 (and manie other which for breuitie I omitt) we were willing to
 insert in this place, because the malice of enuie, that wilbe of as
 long continuance as the world, had enforced vs therto, by reason that
 so admirable a miracle ought not to be related, without due circum-
 stances and proofes, to make mute the perfidious tongues of the euill
 minded enuious.

*Of the Zeale of the honour of God, and saluation of soules which
 the holy Father saint Francis had, after the impression of
 the sacred stigmates, and of the figures precedent.*

THE LX. CHAPTER.

THis glorious Saint hauing felt in his proper flesh the do-
 lours paine of the passion of God, and as it were part-
 lie experienced, of what deere price soules were vnto the
 Sonne of God, he to loose no time began incontinentlie to tra-
 uaille ouer all cittyes and townes instructing by meane of prayer,
 preaching, and the example of good life, God alsisting with mer-
 ueillous miracles, in testimonie of his doctrine, to redeeme the
 precious soules of poore Christians out of the mouth of the perfid-
 ious Lucifer, he being armed with these weapons of the crosse,
 that alwayes ouerthrow euerie ennemie corporall and spirituall of
 the elect of God, who continuallie gett the victorie. And as a new
 Legar deputed of his diuine maiestie, he carryed with him the sea-
 le of the soueraigne bishop IESVS CHRST, wherewith he con-
 firmed his doctrine and his worckes. Therby did he trulie appeare
 to be sent of God: wherefore he not onlie found no contradiction
 where he went, but was exceeding gratefull to all all personnes.
 Besides that, this is also worthy of merueillous consideration, that
 as in all thinges deseruing perpetuall memorie for being of great
 consequence, it semeth that his diuine Maiestie alwayes obserued
 three condicions, prophelying or figuring them precedently, appro-
 uing them by good testimonies with the rumour of present renowme,
 and confirming them afterward by diuine signes and miracles; in like
 sort would he obserue three conditions in this singuler fauour, wherof
 the rumour, renowme, and manifest prooffe, being seene for the

time present, and the miracles afterward, it resteth now that we demonstrate the figure, by which this singuler act hath in a certaine manner bin many times prophesied. First it seemed to be signified by the vision of the glittering and resplendant soules, marked with the signe of the crosse, of whome God constituted him his captaine in the beginning of his conuersion. The same also seemed to be signified by the vision of the crucifix that interiously transpierced his soule with excessiue sorrow, with the voice that told him he must repaire his holy church. And it was also signified by the crosse which Brother Siluester saw to come out of his mouth, that expelled the dragon of hell. Againe it was denoted by the vision which Brother Pacificus had before he was conuerted, when he saw two glittering swordes, that made a crosse vpon his brest. Finally it was signified by the apparition which S. Francis made at the Chapter of Arles, in forme of a crosse in the aire, giuing his benediction to the Religious there assembled. Lett no man therfore presume to contradict so certaine a truth, denounced and prophesied by figures, seene visibly, touched palpably, approued by the church iustlie, and finally by IESVS CHRIST confirmed, by so many miracles in earth and in heauen,

Of the new seruour, and merueillous patience of the saint.

THE LXI. CHAPTER.

*S.F. vsed
a staffe
to goe
with all
the two
last years
of his life
by reason
of his
stigmates
as he had
don the
two first
years of
his con-
uersion.
Luc. 10.*

THe holy Father S.F. finding himselfe enriched with so glorious a treasure, made his habitt to be lengthened, as much as was possible to couer the same, and began thenceforward to carry a staffe, wherwith he walked about the house, though verie seldom, being vnable by reason of the sacred woundes to lett his feet on the ground. It is admirable to consider, that as in the two first yeares of his conuersion, before he founded the Order, he carryed a staffe, so he began againe to carry it two yeares before his death, that he might end by the walking staffe as a true Pilgrime on earth, albeit he had left it vpon obseruation of the worde of IESVS CHRIST, who commanded his disciples not to carry it in their iorney, signifying, that they should not relye on any fauour of the world, vnderstood by the staffe or stalke of a reed more perillous then secure; and afterwarde he conformed himselfe to the ancient fathers, who vsed it att their hermitages, as saint Paul the first hermite, saint Antony and others, and not to be singuler herein, he gaue leaue to all the Religi-
ous

ous, to vse one in their infirmities, sicknesses and old age. Afterward burning with this feruent fire of charitie towards God and his neighbour, he was carryed, as we haue formerlie said, through cityes and townes, where he preached with excelsiue seruour, thirsting with an extraordinarie burning desire to see the number of the elect of God accomplished; to which places he was so welcome and grateful, that when he went from the people he was halfe naked because each one strined to cutt part of his habitt, some with cicers, others with pincers or like instrumentes, carefullie keeping those shredde afterwarde as reliques, with most pious deuotion, for cure of diseases and dangers of this life, others brought him bread to blesse, wherof afterward to make vse in like necessities, hauing seene therof manifest experiences. Notwithstanding all this, the holie Father had a violent desire to retourne to that former humilitie and simplicitie of seruing leapers, and of not knowing the imperfections of his disciples, as he was afterwarde forced to know them, and also of enduring austeritie of life. To this effect he said to his Religious: My Brethren, we must now begin to serue God for to this present we haue done nothing or verie litle. So he proposed in his spiritt to performe great matters, not considering the weaknes of bodie, by reason of the great seruour of his spiritt, wherwith being carryed away, he desired nothing but fresh combates to gett victorie ouer the ennemie, and indeed, he that well considereth it, findeth that feeblenes nor tepeditie haue any place, where the port is alwayes open vnto true loue, which inuiterhand induceth to attempt impossibilitie. And so much the more by reason that he had accustomed his flesh to obey the spiritt, and had such promptitude to obey God, that he was so farre from resisting, that he stroue and endeauoured to worcke aboute his forces. Wherefore God that knew his desire, opened vnto him the meanes of merit, so that he did not onlie desire, with the ineffable dolours of his infirmities, which did so afflict him from the soale of his feet to the crowne of his head, that he had neuer repose; he endured in each of his members an extreame and particuler paine; in such sort that in short time he came to haue nothing but skin on his bones. In all these afflictions he discouered his desire of them, sith that he was neuer heard to vtter so much as one worde of complaint, but he called his dolours his brethren, and his diseases his sisters, yet he answered the Religious, who being moued with compalsion wished him to pray vnto God, that he would please to appeare a litle more mercifull towards him, that if he did not hold him excused in regard of his simplicity, he would teach him what it was to check God in his iud-

iudgements. He omitted not yet to chastise in his body, the excessse of the offence of this Religious, for rudely flinging himselfe out of his bed vpon the ground, he tourned and wallowed vpon it, often kissing it gaue thanckes vnto God, prayled him, and besought him for his greater consolations to redouble his afflictions: which wordes ended. The Religious by force of armes laid him againe on his bed: for he could not helpe himselfe into it. O inuincible patience of this glorious S. comparable to that of Iob! he was doubtles both ioyfull and humble in his tribulations, as an other S. Paul considering that the more he endured of greater paines in his body, the greater vigour and force appeared in his soule, besides what affliction his stigmates procured him, which continually distilled bloud, with such extreme grife, that it was humanely impoissible for him to support them only two dayes, not two yeares as he did for augmentation of his merit and example vnto the world.

How God sometimes conforzed his faithfull seruant in his afflictions.

THE LXII. CHAPTER.

ALl this being very well knowne to almighty God, beside the interiour vertue which he bestowed on him, he did often comfort him exteriourlie. One day to mitigate his dolours therby to raise his spirit vnto God, he had a desire to heare some prayse sung vnto his diuine maiesty, vpon some instrumentes. And therefore he told Brother Pacificus, who had bin a famous & excellent Poete, that though men of this world abuse musicall instrumentes, which were inuented to prayse God, as in deed so many holy men had prayled him thereon: he should neuerthelesse finde meane to haue secretly a violle, and for his consolation, should sing some spirituall prayse, affirming that therein was no offence vnto God, and that it seemed the greifes of his bodye by that meane would tourne into consolation and ioy of the spirit. But Br. Pacificus hauing answered that in so dooing he might scandalize the world, he replied that he had reason, and that he should let it alone. Now God who had a speciall care of him, incontinently sent an Angel that sounded and gaue so sweet a touch to a violle, as may be imagined that an Angel of Paradise could doe, in the same instant comforting both the afflicted body and the soule of the great seruant of God. Addressing himselfe therefore to Bro. Pacificus, who had not heard the melodie no more then his other companions, he caused them to giue thanckes vnto God, for the great consolation which he had voutlasted to send him.

*God sent
Angeli-
call mu-
sicke to
comfort
S. Franc.
in his
sicknes.*

Being

Being in the houle of the Bishop of Alsifum vterlie without all tast, and vnable to eat any thing by reason of the grieve of his infirmities, his companyons asked him wherof he would willingly eat; he answered them: If I could haue a few litle fishes of fresh water, me thincketh I could eat of them. These wordes being ended there entred a boy that brought him many as sent from Brother Girard Minister of Riete, though it were winter and so extreme cold, that it was impossible to take them the riuers being frozen. The Religious exceedinglie admired to perceauce the care which God had to releiue the necessities of his seruant and especially in thinges impossible to men. An other time, desiring to haue a litle lettice he asked some of his companiō who answered that the same day they had bin all gathered. Goe into the garden, said he, and bring me the first herbe that cometh to thy hād, which shall be a lettice. The Religious went and found a very faire lettice, and thanking him who had there set the same for the consolation of the seruant of God, he tooke it vp with great ioy and brought it vnto him: and the S. hauing eaten a therof, lease felt himselfe fully comforted.

*And also
sent him
fish and
lettice
miracu-
lously in
his sick-
nes.*

How he was assured of the Glory of Paradise.

THE LXIII. CHAPTER.

BVt because there cannot be giuen to a seruant of God a greater consolation then the hope and certainty of the glorie to come, wherto S. Paul esteemed not the pangs of this world cōdigne, howloeuere greiuous and continuall they might be; The S. going one day for his consolation to visit S. Clare, with Brother Leonard of Alsifum his companion, the sweetnes of their spirituall discourses was such and so great, that the night surprised thē before they perceaued it. Wherefore constrained by her prayers, her Sisters and her companions, he did eat two morcels with them, and in an instant he was swallowed vp in the holy Ghost and rauished in extasie, with a deep contentment, where he heard that which sequentlie shalbe related. Being returned to himselfe he cryed out with a loud voice; My God be thou prayesd, and incontinentlie went to our Lady of Angels. Arising from the table, he fell on his knees and there was againe in extasie the space of an hower, then instantly went away and left S. Clare and her sisters who were exceedingly greiued therewith. His Cōpany admiring theratt asked him the cause in their way: the S. acknowledge it vnto them, affirming that in the extasie God had reuealed vnto him his saluation by these verie wordes: Francis I promise thee eternall life and assure thee therof, in such sort as I tell thee thou canst no way loose it: for which I thanked him,

A a a

him,

THE CHRONICLES

³³² him, saying: Prayse be to thee my God: then he forbad them to speake thereof till after his death. Being come to our Lady of Angels, for eyght howers together he could not vtter other wordes then these: Be thou praysed my God: yea he could not say his canonicall houre by reason of the ioy that had surprised his hart. After that time his infirmities in such sort encreasing that it manifestlie appeared he could not liue long, one of his freindes, seeing him cloathed with his courtest and patched habitt, and hauing a peece of rugged cloth on his forehead for the infirmities of his eyes, in spirituall mirth said vnto him: Father how will you sell this old habitt? Oh how soone will God buy it of you, and pay you deerlie for it! giuing you in exchange therof an infinitye of precious garmentes of silke and gold besides eternall glorie afterward in the other world. The S. induced and inspired of the holy Ghost, sodenly answered. Brother thou hast reason, for so shall it be, to the honour and glory of God.

*Of the last and extreme sicknes that augmented and redoubled in the holy
Father S. Francis.*

THE LXIV. CHAPTER.

*The As-
sians sent
to pray
S. Francis
to dwell
and end
his dayes
att As-
sium.*

Besides all the other infirmities of his eyes, his stomacke, his liuer, and the greife of his stigmates, there fell also a dropsie into his feet six monethes before his blessed end: Notwithstanding he omitted not to visit the monasteries, citties and townes, to procure the saluation of soules. But his infirmities growing daily more violent, the cittizens of Assisium iealous of so noble and precious a treasure which by right appertayned vnto them, and fearing it would be robbed from them vpon the way, they sent Embassadors to their holy Father, who was then neere to Sienna, to pray and by all sweetnes and amity to enforce him to retourne to his Monasterie. Sainct Francis failed not to comfort them, yelding that benefit to them who in the beginning of his conuersion, vied him as a foole: wherein each one may consider the admirable disposition of God: and then lett him deride his Sainct that can. Now on the way these Cittizens came to a village, somewhat later then they expected: by which meane they were disappointed of all prouision, finding there no Inne, but onlie houses, of cuntry people, which refused to afford the company victuals for monie. They who had charge of the prouision, recounted this discourtesie to Sainct Francis: who answered: See now what vse you make of your mony-flies, retourne againe, and demanda something to eat for the loue of

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of God, and you shall experience what difference there is betweene the vaine hopes of the world, and the true and assured hope of God. The gentlemen obeyed the S. and found for the loue of God so much to eat, that they knew not what to doe with so much food: Hereupon the S. said vnto them: you are of opinion that it is a shamefull thing to demaund an almose: but tell me, wherwith doth all the world liue, but with the continuall almose giuen by almightie God? They were all filled with great admiration, and silent with confusion: and so shrincking their shoulders, they proceeded on their iorney, conducting their Father to his Country, whither being come and for more security brought to the Pallace of the Bishop of Alsifum, master Bon Iohn, a Phisicion and his deere freind came to visite him, whome he prayed to tell him freely his opinion of that sicknes, adiuuring him not to deale with him as with other sicke personnes, feeding him with vaine hopes, wherwith he had not to doe, assuring him that by the grace of God, he rather desired death then life. The Phisicion answered him assuredlie that his infirmity was mortall, and that according to humane iudgement, he could not passe the middes of October. Which the S. vnderstanding, he so strayed himselfe, that he gott on his knees vpon his bed, first stretching his armes, then lifting his two handes towards heauen, with an exceeding seruour of spiritt he said: you are welcome my beloued Sister, the death which thou my God doest send me.

The asisians found food for the loue of God, which was denied them for many.

Of the consolation or exercise of the S. on his later dayes.

THE LXV. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father in this greiuous sicknes had no other recreation and consolation but to prayse God, and to procure his companions to prayse him, by himnes, psalmes, and spirituall Canticles, with which alone and without any other comfort of the world, he qualified that his greiuous infirmity his dolours & his paines, which were such and so cruell, that as he affirmed, it had bin far more tolerable with all kinde of torment to endure a dolourous death by the handes of the executioner, then to suffer what he endured. But considering that the diuine spiritt doth not accord with the humane, nor the children of light, with the children of the world, Brother Helias his Vicar Generall, who went with the said Cittizens to pray him to retourne to Alsifum, and who forsoke him not till his death, to whome on night, two yeares before his death, there appeared a venerable old man, in a white habitt, this was in an Oratory nere to Fulliniū

who willed him to aduertise S. Francie that from thence two yeares, he should be called of God out of this world, which he had told him; this man then seeing this his so vnaccustomed alacrity amidde so many tormentes, and that he did nothing but sing, and cause to be sung prayes to God, without otherwise lamenting his sinnes, as formerly he accustomed to doe, sayd vnto him, that himselfe and his most affectionat freindes were much edified by this his ioy in that mortall infirmity, & were assured that it proceeded only of the integrity of his conscience, which knowing it selfe pure before God, could feare nothing. Not withstanding it was not conuenient in presence of so many seculers, who all knew him to be nerre death, to shew no signe of repentance of his offences past, no remorse of his sinnes committed against God, at least in this terrible passadge of death. S. Francis with great seruour answered him: Brother giue me leaue, giue me leaue I pray thee to reioyce in God and in his prayes, during this sicknes, because by the grace of the holy Ghost, my spirit is in such sort vnited vnto his diuine Maiestie, and so secure that it may reioyce: Remember now, that there are two yeares past since you deliuered me from him an aduertisement of this my passadge: since which time I haue alwayes endeauoured to prepare my selfe, lamenting my sinnes, and satisfying God for them. But sithence that by his immensiue grace, he hath made me worthy of his glory, as he hath reuealed vnto me, I haue euer since endeauoured to reioyce, and now so much more in that the time approacheth, wherein my soule shall for euer be loosed from the waight of this body, and shall goe towards him who hath created it, and in that he will not omitt in me to edifie this people.

How the S. made himselfe be carryed to our Lady of Angels, finding his death to approach.

THE LXVI. CHAPTER.

THe glorious Father therfore perceauing that the day of his death approached, prayed all the gentlemen and his freindes there present, to cause him to be carryed to his church of our Lady of Angels, that he might render vnto God the spirit of life, where he had receaued of him the spirit of grace: So hauing obtayned permission of the bishop and Gouernour of the citty, they went accompanied with the greatest part of the said citty, and comming to the hospitall, which is in the great street betweene the citty and our Lady of Angels, causing himselfe with his bed to be sett on the ground, and turning towards the citty he gaue it his benediction, saying: Citty blessed mayest thou be of the

the soueraigne God, because by thee many soules shalbe saued, and in thee many worthy seruantes of God of both sex shall make their residence, and by thy meane, many shall attaine the kingdome of glorie. So hauing blessed the city, and proceeding his way towards our Lady of Angels, S. Clare his deere and true disciple, imitatrice and daughter in IESVS CHRIST, fearing she should not see him before his death, sent to aduertise him, that herselfe was also in such estate, as she should not liue long after, yea that she thought to goe first; and that therefore she felt an extreme greife, to dye without his holy benediction & without seeing him, who was her master and beloued Father in CHRIST IESVS: and for that occasion she prayed him for the palsion of our Lord I. C. with her knees on the ground, not to permitt her to dye so discontent: but sith he was in his iorney, to doe her that last and singuler fauour as to visitt her, before he went to our Lady of Angels. The holie Father S. Francis felt the bowels of Fatherly cōpalsion to moue in him, in that he could not content her, by reason of the imminent perill wherein he was, and that the Phisicians, nobles and gentlemen there present would not to permitt him; yet procuring wherewith all to write, he sent her by a Religious his benediction in writing, then lifting his eyes to *S. Francis*. heaven he said vnto him: Goe and comfort my beloued sister, telling *prophe-* her this good newes, that she shall see me before she dye, which *sieth that* shalbe shortly: as shall all her Sisters, to their exceeding consolation. *S. Clare* This prophesie sayled not in the effect: for the holie Father being *shall see* dead, when the Citizens, carryed him to bury att Alsium they passed *him be-* through the monastery of S. Damian, as hereafter shall appeare, and *fore her* seeing the body of the Sainct within their Couent, they were all excee- *death.* dingle comforted therewith.

How a Romane Lady very deuout and affected to S. Francis called Lady Iaqueline of the seauen Sunnes, came by diuine reuelation from Rome to the death of S. Francis.

THE LXVII. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father approching neere vnto his death, called a Religious whome he willed to finde out a messenger to goe with al diligence to Rome, expresly to aduertise the Lady of the Seauen Sunnes that she should incontinentlie come to visitt him if she desired to see him liuing; knowing in what affliction she would haue suruiued, if she had not seene him before his death, as he had promised her when he tooke leaue of her att his departure out of Rome: and in meane while procuring wherewith to write, he dictated this letter enuying: To

S. Franc. knew in spirit that the lady of the Seauen-Sunne came to see him.

the Lady of the Seauen-Sunnes, poore Brother Francis, desireth health in our Lord IESVS CHRIST; Know my beloued Sister in IESVS CHRIST, that God by his grace hath reuealed vnto me the last day of my life: Wherefore if you desire to see me liuing, hasten so much as sometime on saterday you may be att our Ladie of Angels, and bring with you a morcell of gray cloth wherewith to couer me, and wax for my seruice. Att the end of this letter, it was reuealed vnto the S. that she would come: wherfore he said to the writer: Rent this letter for there is no need therof. He had scaice ended those wordes, but a messenger came from the said lady, that told him she was att the gate of the Monastery with two of her children, senators of Rome, and a noble and honourable company to visitt him. A while after the said lady came, who entring his chamber, fell incontinently on the ground, humbling her countenance, as an other Magdalen, towards his feet, bathing them with bitter teares; and imprinting her lippes in his sacred stigmates, with such ioy and consolation of spirit, as nothing could be more; she could not be satisfied with kissing them, embracing and clipping them with all reuerence, in regard of their vertue, representing vnto her those of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, she could not depart from him, no more could the Religious, for she was entierlie rauished in this so singular sweetnes of spirit, without any speech att all, till S. Francis called her: att whose voice awakening, she answered the S. (who asked her how it happened that she came so readily) that being one night in prayer, she heard the voice of God, that said: If thou wilt find Brother Francis alieue, goe incontinentlie to our lady of Angels, and carry with thee what thou knowest necessarie to his sepulture, and such meat as thou gauest him att his being in Rome, to comfort him in his sicknes. Which hauing heard, I prepared my selfe verie instantlie, and thus am come. S. Francis gaue thanckes to God, and demaunding the said meates, he relected his body with very great consolation. Now this lady supposing that S. Francis would lye long time sick, determined to send back her children to Rome, and many personnes of note that came also with her: But the holy Father willed them all to stay, and told them he should dye the saterday following, and be interred on the Sonday, and then they might retourne in companie, which was done. This ladie after the death of Sainct Francis, dwelt att Alsifium where she liued verie piouslie, and was afterward buried in the Church of Saint Francis att Alsifium, in a chappell adioyning to the bodie of Sainct Francis.

S. Franc. foretold the dayes of his death & buriall.

How S. Francis gaue his benediction to his eldest sonne, Brother Bernard Quintanalle. Taken out of the sixt chapter of the sixt booke, and put here as the due place therof.

NOW whiles S. Francis was eating the said meates, prepared by the handes of the said Lady, calling to minde that Brother Bernard was with him att Rome the first time that he did eat therof; he asked those present where he was, and caused him to be called to eat therof also. Brother Bernard being come and obeying the Sainct, hauing eaten two morcels with him perceauing that he approached neere his end, making his benefitt of the good occasion, humble demaunded his holie benediction. To whome saint Francis answered: my deere child I graunt it most willinglie: and so commanded his benediction to be written, which thus began: The first Religious and companion that God gaue me, was Brother Bernard Quintanalle, who was the first that began, as he that euer since continued, perfectlie to obserue the rule of the gospell and the Counsailes therof: wherefore aswell in regard of that, as for manie other graces which God hath bestowed on him, I am much obliged to loue him, yea above all other Religious of our Order. And therefore I will and ordaine that euerie other Minister that shall come hereafter, doe loue him as my selfe. Then he had him stand att his right hand, for he had already lost his sight. But Brother Bernard seeing Brother Helias that extremelie desired it, knowing right well the need he had therof, hauing compasion of him, he sent him to the right hand of the Sainct and placed himselfe att the left, contenting himselfe to gaine that soule to God, by the benediction so much desired, of his beloued Father: But saint Francis intending to lay his hand on the head of Brother Bernard, knew either by the touch or by diuine reuelation, that it was Brother Helias, wherefore he sodenlie called Brother Bernard, who answering him, he perceaued by his voice that he was att his left hand, and therefore crossed his handes as did the Patriarch Iacob, and gaue them his benediction, yet alwayes naming Brother Bernard he said vnto him: God giue thee his benediction, & encrease in celestiaall benedictions of IESVS CHRIST, as thou hast bin first called to this holie Religion, to serue for an example of Apostolicall life; and to demonstrate now one ought to follow IESVS CHRIST, in pouerty and in his crosse: sith thou hast not only giuen all they terrestriall substance to his poore, but hast offered thy very selfe vnto him in sacrifice. Be thou therefore blessed of our lord Iesus Christ and of me his poore seruant with an eternal bene-

benediction, goeing, retourning, remayning, sleeping and waking. He that shall blesse thee, be he blessed, and lett not him that shall cyle thee rest vnpunished. Thou shalt be superiour of all thy Brethren and they shalbe subiect vnto thee. Lett him that thou wilt receaue into this Order, be receaued, and him that thou wilt reiect, be reiected. Thou shalt haue liberty to reside where thou wilt, none hauing authority euer to forbidde, or to prescribe thee any law, in the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the blessed holy Ghost. Amen.

Of the testament the holy Father S. Francis made before his death.

THE LXVIII. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis, before he left his spirituall children, determined to leaue them his testament, that therein beholding the will of their holy Father, they might enable themselues to effect it, to meritt the patrimony he bequeathed them in the Euangelicall rule and profelssion; which testament was such: First my Brethren I will imprint in your memory how God drew me vnto him, and how I stripped my selfe all naked before the bishopp and renounced al my possibilities in the world: the seeking to doe pennance, God gaue me this grace, that whereas I formerly abhorred to behold leapers (much more to serue the) I began to loue the extremely: so that what before seemed vnto me bitter & insupportable, was then pleasing & desirable. After that I began simply to pray vnto God and to make vnto him this prayer: Most sacred Lord, we adore thee in this place and in all the churches that are ouer all the world, and doe honoure thee; because by thy holy crosse thou hast redeemed the world. And his diuine goodnes gaue me afterwarde such faith towards Preistes, that liue according to the forme of the holie Romane church, in regard of their Order, that albeit they had persecuted me, I would haue had recourse to none but them selues. And If I had had the wisdome of Salomon, and had mett the most simplest Preist in the world, I would neuer haue preached in his church against his will. And them and all other will feare, loue and honour as my Lordes and mastes, and will remark no sinne in them, in whome I see the Sonne of God, obseruing no other thing of him in this life but his most precious bodie and bloud which they consecrate, receaue and only administer vnto others. And will aboue althings reuerence and honour these sacred mysteries and bestow the in precious places. As also I haue euer reuerenced the holy name of God, & in whatsoeuer papers I haue found it written, in vnseemely places I haue gathered it vp, and doe pray euery one to doe the like, and to putt

putt the papers in honest places. I desire also that all diuines be honoured, such as teach the diuine worde, as they who truly giue vs the spirit and life. Besides I beseech you to referre your selues entierly into the handes of the diuine mercie, who as he hath taught me to liue according to the forme of his holy gospell, will shew you the like, if you follow the rule which his diuine Maiestie hath caused me to prescribe in breife and simple wordes, confirmed afterwarde by his holy vicar on earth. Now all they that presented themselves to liue in this Order, distributed their goodes vnto the poore, as the said rule doth import, they contented themselves with one coat, peiced without and within, and with a corde to girde them, with the linnen breeches, and we would haue no more. We haue for a time liued in this sort, praying in deuotion, the Preistes saying their office, according to the vse of our holy mother the church, and we the lay Brethren in our simplicity, subiecting our selues to all for the loue of I E S V S C H R I S T, and endeavouring to gaine our liuing with the labour of our handes. Now I beseech you so to doe alwayes. And if there be any ignorant, lett the learne and exercise themselves, not vnder hope of gaine, but to giue good example and to shunne idlenes: and if such suffice not to sustaine you, I will that you haue recourse to the most abundant table of our Lord I E S V S C H R I S T: that is, to demaund almosse att the dores, alwayes giuing the benediction which God att first reuealed vnto me, to witt: *The peace of God be in this house, and in all them that dwell therein:* Lett them neuertheles take heed that they receaue nothinge as proper to themselves: for neither will I that there be receaued in common either house or church, that may be tearmed ours, but as shalbe agreeable to the pouertie and simplicity of our Order, which we promise to God in our vowes: But lett vs all continue in this life as true pilgrimes and straungers. I command all vnder obedience, that in what soeuer place they be, they doe not presume to demaund any kinde of priuiledge, or exemption from the court of Rome, either themselves or any person in their behalfe, for their Churches or other places, neither vnder apparence of intencion to preach, nor as being persecuted in their bodies: but if they cannot obserue their rule, in some one place, lett not their demaund be therfore admitted, but lett them goe other where to doe penance with the benediction of God. I was alwayes resolute to obey the Generall of this Order, and the Guardian that haue bin constituted ouer me since I renounced the chardge, in such sort as I would neuer attempt to make choice of my residence, nor to doe any thing without his licence, because he is my master, And although I be simple and infirme, I would alwayes haue a Clerck to performe vnto me the diuine office as the rule importeth. I will likewise that all the

other Religious be obedient to the Generall, to the Prouinciall and Guardian, and that they all read their office according to the rule. And if any one be euer so hardy as to presume to alter the office, or to hold opinion contrarie to the holy Catholike Romane Church, I will that all the other Religious in whatsoeuer place they be, shalbe obliged by obedience to apprehend him and committ him to secure gard, and so send him to the Prouinciall or Generall, who shall present him to our Protestour in such sort as he may not escape: and he shall giue him punishment according to his desert. And lett none affirme this to be a new rule: for it is onlie a remembrance and an exhortation which I poore Brother Francis leaue you as a testament, that the said rule may better and more Catholically be obserued; And because I will that the minister generall, with the other ministers and Guardians be obliged not to adde nor substract from these wordes, but that this my testament be putt with the rule, and be read to my Brethren, Preistes and laitie: I doe further commaund all vnder obedience, that none presume to glose vpon the rule nor this present testament, affirming, that it must be vnderstood after such or such manner: but as God hath made me vnderstand it simplie, lett them alio vnderstand it simply without glose, and lett it be conserued perpetually to the end. And I beseech the omnipotent goodnes, that all they who shall religiously and exactlie obserue these things, may here on earth be filled with the benediction of his Beloued Sonne, with the holy Ghost the Conforter, and with all the blessed Angels and Sainctes; and afterwardes on high in heauen with the benediction of the most soueraigne celestiaall Father. And I Brother Francis, your wretched and vnworthy seruauant in our Lord, giue my benediction to those that shall obserue it, as I haue formerlie said in the behalfe of God the Virgin Mary, and all the Angels and SS. of God in heauen and in earth; in the name of the most soueraigne Father, of his beloued Sonne, and of the holy Ghost the Conforter, So be it, Amen.

Of the supper which the glorious Father S. Francis made with all his children and of the last benediction which he gaue them.

THE LXIX. CHAPTER.

After he had made this last testament; his sicknes so encreased that his present death was generallie expected, but encouraging himselfe in God, he called all the Religious that were in the Monastery, who being come and perceauing that the holy Father intended to giue them his last benediction, they fell all on their knees,

knees, bathing the earth with their teares, and thundering out loud cryes and sighes towardes heauen. S. Francis with a melted hart wept together with them, and he seemed to haue recouered some litle part of his sight; and so laying his hand on their heades by one and one, and firmly beholding them, he blessed them, then afterward he began to blesse them all together, as well the present as the absent, and all those that should enter into his holy Religion; lamenting that he could not haue them all present, in regard of his extreme loue vnto them, which exceeded that of a mother towardes her children, himselfe also hauing engendred them in IESVS CHRIST: And the more to comfort them, he caused bread to be brought which he diuided in pieces, in imitation of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and gaue to each a piece, bidding them to eat it for his loue att this his departure. Then were there teares redoubled, many of them did not eat all their portion, but did reserue some part therof, which afterwardes was effectuell in restoring desired health to such as were diseased: which done, this holie Father for his last aduertisement, recommended that holy place to his Vicare Generall and to all the rest, admonishing them neuer to abandon it, but that if they were extruded att one dore they should enter in att an other, alleading that the place was holie, and the true habitation of God, of the glorious Virgin Marie, of the Angels and Sainctes of the liuing God, and that therefore they had so miraculously multiplied there, where they had bin illuminated in his seruice for the saluation of so many soules; wherefore he doubted not but whatsoeuer should in that place be demaunded of his diuine maiestie, with a pure and contrite heart, should alwayes be obtayned, who also would not faile greiuously to chastice such as should offend in that sacred place, being the true habitation by grace of the celestially Court, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost.

Of the blessed and glorious death of the holy Father S. Francis.

THE LXX. CHAPTER.

THe fourth of October, in the yeare 1226. vpon a Saturday in the euening twenty yeares after his Conuersion, and the fise and fortieth of his age, the holy Father hauing bin verie aptly cutt, squared and accommodated by the hard stroakes of tribulations, temptations, afflictions, incommodities, and infirmities, as a liuelie and firme stone, that should be placed in the principall corners of the supreme Citty of the celestially Hierusalem, he heard the voice

of his sweet Lord that called him vnto him. Then to make publike manifestation that he had not any thing in this world, and with the more facility to wrestle against his furious aduersary in this last conflict and triall; wherein consisted the crowne, he with an exceeding feruour and courage stript himselſe all naked, as he had bin without any infirmity, then caſt himſelfe on the ground, couering with his left hand, the precious wound of his right hand, and tounring his ioyfull face towardes the kingdome whither he was to goe, he began to prayſe and bleſſe his ſweet lord IESVS CHRIST, that being diſcharged and freed of all worldly impedimentes, he might aſcend to heauen and enioy his diuine Maieſtie; then tounring towardes his Religious, he ſaid vnto them: My deere Brethren, I haue to this preſent done what I ought to doe; Theſe wordes were diuerſely vnderſtood of the Religious, ſome of them wept in regard he was to leaue them without Paſtour and gouernour, others, becauſe he ſeemed to leaue them as men ſorlorne, others, for other occaſions; only the Guardian, whome he obeyed, vnderſtood the deſire of the holy Father; wherefore taking preſentlie an habitt with the cord and linnen breeches, brought and gaue it vnto him, ſaying: Father take this habitt which I lend you, with the corde and breeches, that you may be buried therewith as a poore creature, who of your ſelfe haue not ſo much as wherewith to couer your nakednes: I command you to receaue it in this your laſt houre, euen by the vertue and meritt of obedience; wherof the Sainct diſcouered to haue the greateſt contentment that can be imagined, conſidering that in this extremity he had obſerued his holy pouerty, in ſuch ſort as he deſired euen to the laſt end: He contentedlie accepted the breeches, but to conſorme himſelfe entierlie to his truely-beloued IESVS CHRIST that would dye naked on the croſſe, to the performance wherof wanting nothing but to dye naked, hauing already bin, and euen for the preſent being admirably crucified by the vertue of the almighty, he commaunded his Religious, not only to permitt him to dye on the ground, but euen to leaue him there a long time after his death. Hauing procured to be brought vnto him the holy Sacramentes, and they being ſucceſſiueſly adminiſtred vnto him, thoſe I meane which the Church accuſtometh to afford ſuch as are ready to dye, he laſtly tounred towardes his Religious, to whome he made a worthy ſermon, exhorting them to the loue of God, then of their neighbour, and eſpecially to obedience vnto his holie Romane Church, next to obſerue their pouerty, and before the ſame and all other thinges, to be alwayes mindfull to preſerre the obſeruance of the holy ghospell, and the diuine counſailes therof. Then croſſing his hâdes, this great Patriarch of the poore gaue his holy benediction to all his Religious, both preſent and abſent, ſaying: My

deere

S. Francis before his death stript himſelfe all naked.

S. Francis receaueth the holy Sacraments before his death.

deere Brethren, God of his mercy blesse you, as also I blesse you, be it *And gaue*
 his holy will to confirme it in heauen. Remyne ye all in his holy feare, *his holy*
 perseuering alwayes therin; for the time of afflictions approach, wherein *and last*
 they shalbe happy who shall perseuer euen to the end: remayne ye all *benedi-*
 in his holy obedience, as you haue solemnely promised vnto him. Fi- *ction to*
 nally remayne ye all in his most holy peace, and in charity among your *his Reli-*
 selues, God blesse you. I goe in great hast vnto God, to whose grace *gious.*
 I recommend you, Amen. Which hauing said, he asked for the gospell,
 and speaking no more to any person, he only desired that place to be
 read vnto him where is mentioned the departure of our lord: *Ante diem*
festum pasche: which being read to the end, he began to say to himselfe: *The deare*
Voce mea ad Dominum clamaui. And being come to the verse, *Educ de cu-* of S. F.
stodia animam meam, that is, deliuer my soule if thou please my God *the 45.*
 out of this prison, that it may attaine to thee my God and my lord, *yeare of*
 where the iust expect me, to the end thou mayest giue me my recom- *his age*
 pence. Which being ended, this holy soule, at it desired, was deliue- *the 20. of*
 red out of the prison of her proper flesh, and eleuated to heauen, there *his con-*
 foreuer to enioy the eternall bounty, with all the saintes his elected *uersion,*
 of both sexes, in that degree which his diuine maiestie ordayned and *& of our*
 prepared for him. *Lord the*
1226.

*How some saw the soule of the glorious Father saint Francis ascend
 in glory.*

THE LXXI. CHAPTER.

THis holy soule failed not to appeare to some when it ascended *The soule*
 to the celestially glory: For Brother Angelus a Religious of wor- of B. An-
 thy sanctity, being att that time prouinciall of the prouince of *gelus ac-*
 Naples, and very neere his end, saw in an instant the soule of the saint *compa-*
 as a resplendant starre on the toppe of a verie bright cloud, to be *meth*
 transported aboute the great waters, and directlie mounted and eleua- *that of S.*
 ted into heauen. And albeit he had the space of two dayes lost his *Fr. into*
 speech, he neuertheles then resumed his spirittes; for seeing the bles- *glory.*
 sed spirit of the saint, he began to crye out: Stay for me Father, stay *He appe-*
 for me, for I goe also with you. The Religious asking what he me- *ared to*
 ant therbie; See you not, said he, our holie Father saint Francis that *the Bis-*
 now goeth to the glory of Paradise? which hauing spoaken, he yelded *hop of*
 his soule to God, and followed his most holy Father. The Bishop of Al- *Assisium*
 fisisium being gone in pilgrimage to visitt the Church of S. Michael the *presently*
 Archangell, on the mount Gagan, S. Francis appeared vnto him the ve- *after his*
 ry night of his death, and said: My lord, know that I haue left the *death.*

*Vision of
the pas-
sadge of
the soule
of S. Fr.
vnto glo-
ry.*

world and goe to heauen. The Bishop therefore being risen, told his people that S. Francis was dead the night before, which was proued to be true. An other Religious of this Order, being the same night rapt into deep contemplation, saw the blessed Deacon of IESVS CHRIST vested with a very rich tunicle, accompanied with a great multitude of soules that attended him as a worthy Prince, who so ascended into a palace of merueillous beauty and eminency; it is piously beleueed, that the said soules were by his merittes deliuered out of Purgatory. This glorious soule ascended to glory accompaigned with many Angels, that attended and visited him continually in this life, and is now seated among the Seraphins, which glory he merited not only in this life, by the excessiue and Seraphicall loue of God, but also it appertayned vnto him in regard of the Seraphicall vision of IESVS CHRIST, who transformed him into himselfe, making him a Seraphin by grace, and sealing the same with diuine scales, as hath bin reuealed to many holy personnes worthy of creditt, as well during the life of the Sainct, as after his death: The verie birdes, and particulerlie the Larkes that were much beloued and verie familiar vnto him, did exceedinglie reioyce att his glorie, a great flight of them appearing verie earlie the next morning on the rouse of the house where sainct Francis lay dead, warbling a verie delightfull and extraordinarie note, yea as it were miraculous, which continued diuers howers, celebrating the prayles of their glorious Sainct, and giuing testimonie of his glory.

The vision ensuying is extracted out of the 49, chapter of the sixth booke, and here put in more proper place.

THe blessed passadge of S. Francis was also reuealed to Father Christopher, who was present att the Chapter of Arles in Prouence where S. Antony of Padua preaching, S. Francis appeared in the aire, in forme of a crosse, being yet aliue, and dwelling in Italy; the apparition was in this manner: The said Father being in the borrough of Marulo in the bishoperick of Cardoua, he seemed in dreaming to be att the dore of a house wherein S. Francis lay sicke, and hauing knocked, he was by commandement of the Sainct admitted entrance, in whose presence comming, he demanded his benediction, which the Sainct very graciously gaue him; and being about to depart, he said vnto him: Retourne my sonne into thy prouince, and tell my brethren, that I haue performed the course of my life, and now doe goe to heauen: the said Father Christopher in the morning recounting this vision to the Religious, it afterwarde appeared that

that the holie Father S. Francis att that verie hower, departed out of this life vnto the other.

Of the beauty and splendour of the sacred body of the holy Father saint Francis, and of the great concourse of people that from enery part repaired to see him.

THE LXXII. CHAPTER.

THe blessed Father S. Francis being the seruant and freind of the omnipotent, was Founder and Captaine of the Religion of the Frere Minors, a most singuler professour of pouerty, a patterne of patience, proclamer of the truth, a mirour of sanctitie, and finallie the pourtraiture of perfection, according to Euangelicall doctrine; mounting by assistance of diuine grace with a due ordered and measured progresse, from vertue to vertue, from meaner matters to such as were more high and sublime, as one that became rich by pouerty, high exalted by humility, liuing eternallie by mortification, most prudent by simplicity, shining and resplendant by his honesty. For which cause God would also illustrate this his seruant with an extraordinarily glory and splendour after his death, preserving his body entier, incorruptible, pure and shining, in such sort as he seemed to haue giuen in him in this world a perfect patterne of the generall resurrection when our flesh shall rise againe for euer incorruptible and immortall. There were seene the said sacred stigmates in his handes and feet engrauen by the supreme artisan, after an admirable and incredible manner: for the nailes were in such sort framed of his proper flesh, that drawing them one the one side, the sinowes and arterye waynes yielded; as also on the other side the said arteries would stretch with a miraculous artifice. The like may be said of the feet: the sacred wound of the side was in forme rather round then otherwise, and of couler vermillion resembling a naturall rose, and all the other flesh that was naturallie browne and very hard by meanes of disciplines and inconueniences past, became in an instant, white, bright, soft and delicate as the flesh of a tender child. There was not seene ouer all his bodie (which to each one represented the first innocencie, and second natiuity to come by resurrection in glory) any other blacknes then the heades of those blessed nayles, which yet was a blacknes that equaled the splendour of a glittering starre. In which respect it is not to be admird if his spirituall children themselves, knew not which passion in them was grater, either the greife of the losse of their

their holie Father, or the present consolation to haue had such and so excellent a Father, whome, by so many manifest signes they might assuredly know not to haue abandoned them, but euen being in heauen did alwayes behold gouerne & assise them. And doubtes the eminencie of this rare miracle, was sufficient to breake the most obdurate & obstinate heart, and to mollifie and soften it as waxe, with contrition and faith towards God. The death of the holy Father being diuulged ouer Alsifium, and the neighbour places, there reprayred such a concourse of people to see his glorious body, that it was impossible to resist them. Wherefore it was consulted & concluded not to admitt entrance vnto any, but to those of Alsifium and such as could not with ciuill curtesie be denied, who entring att their ease, beheld and handled att their pleasure the blessed stigmates of this holy seruant of God. Among other there arriued a noble man called Hierome native of Alsifium a learned man and of great authority, who as an other Thomas, doubting of the sacred stigmates before he saw them, could not satisfie himselfe with turning and retorning his handes and feet, & to moue hither and thither the hard payles: and the more he considered the matter, the more he admired: therefore with his incredulitie he testified this truth to all the assemblie; so that the holie Father was rightlie inspired of God, when he commanded the Religious to leaue his body naked a long time on the ground: that this so singuler grace of God might be manifested. The Religious and people there present spent that night in prayles and psalmes, offering infinite thanckes to God, so that this watch might rather be esteemed, a feast of celestiall Angels, then humane funerals.

Of the stature and naturall qualitie of the body of the glorious Father S. Francis, extracted out of the thirtieth chap. of the tenth booke, and here inserted in due place.

WE haue thought it conuenient after the discourse of the splendour of the body of this glorious S. for the satisfactiō of many, to decipher all the other naturall qualities therof. The glorious Father S. Francis then, was of a meane stature, and rather litle then great, he had his head round, his visage longe, a full forehead, black and modest eyes, with black beard and haire, he had a ioyfull and sweet countenance, his nose correspondantlie proportioned, litle eares, his flesh broune, his tongue sharpe and quicke, a voice cleare, sweet, vehement in deliuey, and elegant in vtterance, his teeth white, litle, and equall; he was by nature indifferentlie leane, and of a most delicate complexion, of a worthy spirit, prompt and readie.

me-

memorie, and of litle sleepe. To conclude, he was expert, dilligent, liberall and meeke in conuersation, and verie discreet in accommodating himselfe to the behauiour of others. Wherefore after his conuersion vnto God, he was most holy among the holy, and most humble and abiect among sinners, but almost alwayes strictlie vnitied vnto IESVS CHRST, in such sort that whosoever beheld him esteemed him a man of an other world.

Of the prophesie of the Abbot Ioachim, of the person of the holy Father Sainct Francis: being the sequel of the same chapter.

THe Abbot Ioachim, who liued more then an hundred yeares before S. Francis, thus prophesied of him: *Veniet como insignitus characteribus Iesu Christi.* that is: There shall come a man adorned and enriched with the woundes of our Lord IESVS CHRIST: he left his image naturally drawne att Venise in the church of S. Marck, such as we haue formerly described, and with stigmates enameled after the Mosaicall manner.

Of the Buriall of the body of the blessed Father S. Francis.

THE LXXIII. CHAPTER.

THe afore mentioned Lady Iaqueline of the Seauen Sunnes, was the last that could not be satisfied with seeing and touching as an other Magdalen, this sacred body of her deere master; She did nothing but bath it with her gracious teares and dry it with her kisses: the extreme swetnes that proceeded from this holie body, but particulerlie from the sacred stigmates, exceeded all other sweetnes: neuer thelesse she held her eyes alwayes fixed on the wound of his side, whereto she often applyed her mouth and handes, whence she receaued such and so exceeding consolation, that it seemed vnto her in this conuersion with her dead master and friend, hat her soule, with a straung and admirable ioy began to liue. Butt to the cittizens of Alsium that desired to carry him to buriall, finding much delay, euery howe seemed an hundred, by reason of the extreme feare they had that so precious a treasure, by some extraordinarie accident might be taken from them: wherefore they placed a guard before the monasterie gate, and soldiers diuided through the street euen to the gate of the citty, which cittizens so importuned the said Lady, that she annoynted him with precious iointment, then cloathed him in a new gray habitt which she had expres-

The lady of the Seauen Sunnes as an other Magdalen annoynted the body of S. Fr.

*He was
entered
as he de-
sired in
the place
of execu-
tion being
the most
abiekt of
the city.*

*How S.
Clare
saw the
body of
S. Franc.*

ly brought from Rome, according to the aduertisement of the Angelk, and the Religious so opened this habitt, that the wound of his side might easily be seene. This glorious Sainct did alwayes in his lifetime desire that his bodie should be buried in the basest place of all the city of Alsiliu, his hart excepted, which he deputed to our Lady of Angels, as during his life he had by affection there settled the same, and in deed God did not frustrate him of this iust desire: for his holy body was entered (though this were not till foure yeares after, by reason that the monalterie was not yet build there, nor the church which they sumptuouslie built there afterward) in the most abiekt place of Alsilium where malefactours were executed, called the mount of hell; the common opinion is that his hart is in the chappell of S. Mary of Angels, where, according to report, it is preserved with great reuerence. On the sonday morning, all the people being assembled with bowes of trees, and the Religious, Preistes, and Gentlemen with their burning torches and lightes, carried this holie bodie as in procesion, first to the Church of S. Damian, to S. Clare, that the prophesie of the Sainct might be accomplished, sending her worde some dayes before that she should shortly see him, to her exceeding consolatio. The grate being opened, the body of the Sainct was brought in to the Religious, who were so comforted therewith, that greife could finde no place in their hartes, particularly in that of S. Clare, who endeauouring in vaine to pluck out a nayle of his handes, to keep it with her as a relique, she began againe with her Sisters to bath this holy bodie with teares, encouraging themselues together to proceed in the way begun of the crosse of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST which he had taught them. And so after they had restored this holie bodie to the people, who weare troubled att this long attendance, they carried it to be entered in a new sepulcher within the Church of S. George, as in a dispositive, where it remayned full foure yeares vnder guard; till his church was builded att the Mount of hell as aforesaid. It was not without mysterie that he reposed in the said church wherein he had bin baptised, had learned his first letters, and where he had deliuerd his first preachinges, therefore it seemed verie reasonable that his bodie should begin to repose in that place, whither the said Lady of the Seauen-Sunnes, repayed neuer to abandon him, forsaking her habitation in Rome, and neuer left this body till her death when she went for euer to dwell with his blessed soule in Paradise.

How the glorious Father Saint Francis was canonized by Pope Gregorie the ninth,

THE LXXIV. CHAPTER.

THe merittes and glorie of the holie Father S. Francis began by his great miracles to be diuulged, whence succeeded that him- selfe raigning in heauen, his sanctitie was also by diuine power manifested here on earth, which he had neuerthelesse alredy made sufficientlie apparant to the world in his life, directing an infinite number of soules in the infallible way of vertue. The brute of the admirable things which God wrought by his seruant Francis came euen to the eares of Pope Gregorie the ninth, who resting assured that the S. was glorified with God, not only in regard of the said miracles wrought after his death, but euen of the experience had with his owne eyes; desiring here below to comforme himselfe to the will of God as his true Vicar, he determined with a pious and deuoted zeale to canonize him, and propole him to the world for a remarckeable example of sanctity, and to take all scruple from the Cardinals and others, he caused all his principall miracles to be examined and approued by actes of publike Notaries, and infinite testimonies worthie of beleife. So the Cardinals and all the principall diuines of his Court being herein duly aduertised, concluded that it was iust and verie expedient vnto the Church of God, to canonize this glorious Saint his seruant. The yeare 1228. the Pope himselfe went with his Court to Alsium ex- preslie with this resolution, and the sixteenth of Iulie, a yeare and nine monethes and halfe after the death of this glorious Saint vpon a Sondag morning his holines, with manie ceremonies and great solemnitie, inscribed the blessed Father saint Francis in the catalogue of the saintes; and before they departed thence, his Church was begun to be built in the said citry, and in the foundation therof the Pope himselfe, in presence of an infinite multitude of people, laid the first stone, and thenceforward the place which was called the Mount of hell, was nominated the mount of Paradise.

S. Fr. was canonized a yeare and nine months after his death by the same Pope at Alsium.

The bulle of canonization of the holy Father S. Francis; extracted out of the first chapter of the tenth booke, and here more aptly placed.

Gregory Bishop, the Seruant of the seruantes of God. To our venerable Brethren Archbishoppes, Bishoppes, and to our beloued children, Abbottes, Priors, Archpreistes, Archdeacōs, Deanes, & other Prelates of the church, to whose knowledge these presentes shall come, health and Apostolicall benediction. As the vessels of gold which S. Iohn saw full of perfumes, (which are the prayers of SS.) powred out most sweet odours before the most high, to destroy the corruption of our sinnes: we also beleeeue that it is a great furtherance to our saluation, with great reuerence to haue memory of his saintes on earth, and with solemnity to publish the merittes of those whose assistance by their continuall intercessions we hope for in heauen. Knowing therfore right well the conuersion, life and merittes of the holy Father S. Francis, Institutour and Gouvernour of the Order of Freer Minors, yea by our owne experience, and by the testimony of others of most worthy credit, who haue seene the notable miracles which God by meanes of him hath wrought: we are likewise assured that he is glorified in heauen, his life and apparant renowne dissipating the obscuritie of sinners, that liue and haue liued in the shadow of death both men and women: for corroboration of the faith of the holy church, and to the confusion of the malice of heretikes, the contentment of a great number of them that haue and doe follow him, yet flourishing and leading a celestially life. Wherefore that it may not seeme we intend to frustrate the said S. of the honour due vnto him, permitting him to be deprived of the reuerence which men owe him, as one already glorified of God; by the aduise and counsaile of our venerable Brethren the Cardinals, and of all the Prelates now here present, we haue iudged it requisite, to inscribe him in the catalogue of SS. that as a candle of God, he giue light here belowe, no way deuering to be hidden vnder a bushell: but to be sett on an high candlesticke of his holy Church. We therfore command you in vertue of these presēt Apostolicall letters, that for the vniuersall benefitt, you awaken the deuotion of your people to the veneration of this S. of God, euery yeare celebrating his feast on the fourth day of October, and that you admonish euery one to obserue the same, that by his prayers and merittes, God may graunt vs his holy grace in this life, and his glory in the other. Giuen att S. Iohn Lateran, the six and twentieth of march, the second yeare of our Papacie. The originall of this authenticall bull is extant in the great Conuent of the Cordeliers att Paris.

Of the great deuotion which Pope Gregory the ninth euer had to the Order of S. Francis: extracted out of the eleuenth chapter of the tenth booke, and here put in due place.

Considering that we haue discoursed of the canonization of the glorious Father S. Francis, performed by Pope Gregory the ninth, it seemeth to the purpose to sett downe what also concerneth the said Pope, touching the familiarity and deuotion which he euer carryed towards this glorious S. and his Order, and the prophesie wherby S. Francis often reuealed vnto him that he should attaine to the dignitie of the Papacie. His holinesse being yet Cardinall of Honoria, and Protectour of this Order, had euer a perticuler deuotion to his Religion; so that discoursing once together he said vnto him; I beseech you Father for the loue of IESVS CHRIST tell me freely your opinion: for I am determined to obey you in that you shall resolue me: which I promise you and call God to witnesse: to witt, whither I shall liue in this dignity, or serue God in your Religion, leauing the world and vanities therof, and be cloathed in your habitt. Which S. Francis hearing, and considering what a beneficiall member he was vnto the church, answered, that on the one side he might doe the Church of God and the world good seruice in this present estate, considering that he was a man of great experience, very prudent and iudicious of Counsaile, and on the other side being such and in such dignity in the Church, and thence entring into religion, should giue a most worthy example, and by his preachings purchaing many soules to God should exceedingly benefit the world: therefore he could not herein resolue him without reuelation from God; and so he left him extremely perplexed. But a litle after knowing by diuine reuelation that he should be Pope; many occasions happening of writing vnto him concerning his religion, he thus made the superscription of his letter: To the future Father of the world the Cardinall, and so it came to passe: for after the death of Pope Honorius, he times was chosen in his place the same yeare that the S. dyed. It is said that of deuotion vnto that Order, he often went vnkowne in company of the Frere Minors wearing the habitt, and particularly on good friday, when he went to visit the Churches, and in this sort did wash the feet of the poore with them. Wherefore he failed not with his vtmost affection to fauour the two Religions of S. Dominick and S. Francis, in such sort vnkowne that he canonized this holy Father as we haue said, the second yeare of his Papacie, and S. Antony of Padua, in the sixt, as in due place shalbe mentioned, he also canonized S. Dominick the eight yeare of his Papacie.

Pope Gregory the 9. being Cardinall would become a Frere Minor.

S. Francis fortold and prophesied to Pope Gregory the 9. that he should be Pope.

This Pope sometime of claued himselfe in habitt of a Frere Minor & vnkowne did his deuotion among them.

*How the body of the glorious Father saint Francis, was transported
into his owne church.*

THE LXXV. CHAPTER.

THe yeare of grace 1230. the Frere Minors, being assembled att Aisilium there to hold their Generall Chapter, when the translation of this holy body was to be made, from the church of S. George into the new church builded to that purpose, there repaired an infinite multitude of people from all partes of Italy, and many further remote to see this precious body. But brother Helias, who by the fauour and assistance of the Pope and many secular gentlemen (though Brother Iohn Parer were Minister Generall) caused the holy body without priuity of the said Generall or other persone to be secretly remoued, permitting none sauig only certaine of his freindes to know where it reposed; which he did for certaine humane considerations. And this exceedingly disquieted the said Religious, who came, rather to see the holy body, then to hold the Chapter. Brother Helias satisfied them with very few, yet witty wordes; so that this notwithstanding, the said translation was celebrated with a very sumptuous solemnity; the Pope hauing expresly sent thither his Apostlicall Noncioes as well to make his excuse of not comming in person, by reason of certaine lawfull impedimentes, as also to adorne that new church with a great crosse of gold enriched with many precions stones, wherein was sett a litle peice of the true crosse, and also with many dressinges and vessels to trimme and decke the high altare and many other rich ornamentes; and withall a good almose to defray the said translation, and towards the finishing of the said building then halfe erected. His holines by Apostolicall authoritie exempted the said church, as also his monastery from all the landes subiect to the Romane Church, and would that it should be immediatly subiect to the holy Sea, himselfe hauing there laid the first stone. Now this holy treasure being translated and transported, thus sealed with the character of the omnipotent, it pleased his diuine maiesty by meane of his seruant to worck many miracles: therby to induce the faithfull by seruent imitation to follow his steppes: considering that during his life he had bin so deere vnto him, as that by contemplation he had transported him as Enoch into Paradise, and as Elias had bin carryed away on a fiery chariott, by reason of his seruēt zeale of charity: he in like sort made him famous on earth after his death (as in the third book shall appeare) curing the deafe, the blinde, maymed and leapers, by his merittes expelled deuils from the bodies of the possessed,

loosed imprisoned captiues, deliuered women in trauaile and child-bed, helped all sortes of diseases, as also trauaillers by sea, that were deliuered safe and sound from the depth of the Ocean, in the time of horrible tempestes, which disaster by their sinnes they had deserued; finally rayeing the dead, as in his life time he had reduced many to diuine grace: In such sort that God made him to be alwayes present with the vertue of heauen, vnto such as with an ardent faith did inuocate him, whome he freed of all their dangers, to the praise and glorie of his diuine Maiestie, and of his glorious seruant saint Francis.

Here ensue many apparitions and miracles of the holy Father S. Francis wrought after his death, with a catalogue of his vertues, for which he merited such notable giustes of his diuine Maiestie. This was dispersed throughout, but the translatour hath collected it & here placed it as in place proper & particular to S. Francis.

And first of an admirable manner wherein S. Francis appeared to Brother Leo, taken out of the sixteenth chap. of the sixth booke.

Some time after the death of the glorious Father S. Francis, Brother Leo, vnable any longer to support the absence of his deerey beloued Father, began with the most affection he could to pray almighty God that he would voutsafe to shew him his deere master: and to obtaine the same, he retired himselfe into a solitarie place where he continuallie persisted, fasting, weeping, and afflicting himselfe. Vpon this occasion, the holie Father who affected those that were his more internallie being in heauen, then he had done on earth, appeared vnto him exceeding ioyfull and resplendant, hauing a paire of winges as feathers of gold, the nailles of his feet and handes were as those of an eagle, likewise of gold. Brother Leo was filled with ioy and consolation, yet exceedingly amazed att the rariety of those feathers and nailles: wherefore hauing done him reuerence and kissed his feet and handes, he prayed him to let him vnderstand what the feathers and nayles might signifie. The Saint answered: among manie graces which God hath giuen me, this is one, that I assit my Religious and such as are affected vnto myne Order: and that I may be instantlie present att their affections, when they haue recourse vnto me, and also to assit the carriage of their soules to heauen, I haue the vse of these winges and nayles not only to cause the deuils to fly, but euē to wound them, and to chastice the Brethren that grow negligent and.

and trouble mine Order, and such as persecute it, be they Religious or secular.

Of an other vision that the said Brother Leo had, of the vniuersall iudgment, wherein S. Francis made intercessi.on, taken out of the 17. chapter of the sixt booke.

BRother Leo vpon an other time in vision saw preparation to the generall and last iudgement of God, in a great feild where the Angels founded their trumpettes to assemble all the world, and there were instantly placed two ladders, that reached euen from the earth to the throne where the sonne of God was to sitt; the one was white, the other red: Our Lord incontinentlie appeared in vehement choller, vpon the red ladder, threatening as if he had bin greiuously offended. He seemed to see S. Francis come downe on the said red ladder and call his Religious, whome he animated to present themselues couragiously: att which voice many of his Religious began boldlie to ascend the said ladder. But how it chaunced he knew not, they all fell to the ground; wherfore S. Francis began to pray vnto God for them, and God shewing him his woundes renewed distilling out bloud abundantlie, answered: Thy Religious haue procured me all this. S. Francis yet desisted not to pray him againe to shew them mercie: and then called them againe, saying: make an other attempt to ascend, and feare not, nor be you terrified that you haue already fallen: but repose confidentlie in God, without dispaire, and ascend by the other white ladder; which doing, they found att the toppe therof the glorious Virgin Mary, who ioyfully receaued them, and procured them all, entrance into Paradise.

How the glorious Father S. Francis appeared to Iohn de Brenne, king of Hierusalem, and Emperour of Constantinople, whome he caused to take his habitt, and to die therein. Taken out of the eleuenth chapter of the tenth booke.

THe Count of Vienna, called Iohn de Brenne, was a most valiant knight, and worthy Catholique, he was of the race of Godfry of Bullen, first king of Hierusalem, as himselfe was also crowned within Tyre; the yeare 1210. he obtayned manie notable victories against the ennemies of I E S E V S C H R I S T: as, against the Mores in Syria, and against the Soldan of Ægipt, from whome att length he tooke Damietta, which afterwarde he lost againe with all his armie, through default of an Apostolicall Legatt that was in his camp. Wherevpon retourning to require helpe of the Christian Princes

of

of Europe, and passing Sicilia, he maryed one of his daughters to the Emperour Federick, the second, vpon condition that he should assyst him in the enterprise of the holy land, and for dowry gaue him the title of king of Hierusalem, together with all the iurisdiction and authority he had there: thence is it that the kinges of Sicilia haue euer since challenged and enioyed this title; but the Emperour did not only not assyst him, but proued his aduersary; so that being in miserie, he entred into the seruice of Pope Gregory the ninth, and then contracted amity with the holy Father S. Francis, where God assisting him, he continued not long but was called from Greece to be gouernour of Constantinople, where marying an other of his daughters to their Emperour Baudouin, that was yet a childe, he resigned his Empire vnto him as a worthy protectour and coadiutor, principallie after the said mariage. He gouerned that contry very prudently all the time of his life, which was about seauen yeares, and then dying, as hereafter we shall relate, he againe resigned the Empire very peaceable to his Sonne in Law. This worthy captain of IESVS CHRIST, both corporall and spirituall, hauing alwayes in memory the end of his life, did very instantly demaund of God, that he would please to inspire him to end his dayes in his seruice and in such sort as should be most acceptable vnto him, wherfore after many prayers, the holy Father S. Francis appeared one night vnto him, hauing in his hand a very poore habitt with the corde and sandales, and said: Iohn, thou must dye with this habitt, wherwith being exceedingly amazed he awakened, yet discovered it not to any person. The two nightes following, he had againe the same vision, and the third, sauing that the third time he added that he should not be terrified to consider or feare his fall againe into milery: for, that was the habitt of a Religious, and as soone as he awaked, calling for Brother Angelus his Confessour, disciple of the holy Father S. Francis and declaring vnto him his vision, the Religious graciously eucouraged him to take the habitt, wherein he made no difficultie, but shewed himselfe most ready, especially being surprised with a tercian ague that sodenly assaulted him, wherof he dyed very piously with the vtterance of these wordes: Almighty God, I now dye contentedly and very willingly, in this poore habitt of a begger, as a punishment of so many vaine superfluities, wherein, to the great prejudice of my soule, I haue exceeded in the worlde: wherfore I humbly beseech thine infinite bounty to accept this my good will, in regard that thou knowest that if I should liue longer, I would neuer forsake this abiest and holy pouerty. This great Prince did by example demonstrate to all men, that to reiect the vanities and wealth of the world, is not so great a disgrace and shame as it is reputed.

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*Of certaine miracles wrought in Spaine by the merittes of the holy
Father S. Francis. Taken out of the fourteenth
chapter of the tenth booke.*

*S. Francis
cured a
lame
girle.*

IN the city of Girone within the Country of Catalogne, the daughter of a poore woman, about ten or twelue yeares of age, was solamed and benumbed in her feet and handes, that she was not only vnable to vndertake any exercise, but euen could not feed herselfe: which exceedingly perplexed and annoyed her mother, as wel in regard of her pouerty, as of the trouble she incurred therby. And being one day otherwise employed, she forgott to giue her daughter to eat, who att night complayning, her mother as disquieted answered her: Would to God daughter thou wert in heauē, sith I am so troubled to serue thee, & that thou canst doe me no seruice againe. The girle tooke these wordes so greiuously, that she would eat nothinge that euening, and remayned all night much afflicted, till she heard it ring to matines att the Church of S. Francis: which made her remember the great miracles which then were wrought by the merittes of S. Francis, and then said with her selfe: S. Francis, if that be true which is said of thee, I most humbly beseech thee voutsafe to make farther prooffe on me of thy sanctity freeing my mother and me from such an insupportable torment and affliction. S. Francis and S. Antony incontinentlie appeared vnto her, cloathed in white, and girded with a cord, seeming as white as snow: S. Antony tooke her by the feet, and S. Francis by the handes, and lifted her out of the bed, and sett her on the ground, so leauing her entierly cured. When the SS. were departed, the girle said to Sainēt Francis, Lord who art thou, that hast done so singuler a fauour to my mother and me? Sainēt Francis answered, that he was the same whome she had so deuoutly inuocated, and bid her to arise, because she was cured: which said, they both disappeared. The girle perceauing herselfe to be cured, full of ioy and admiration att the miracle, with a loud voice called her mother, who was abroad with her neighbours, and they hearing a cleare voice, came speedilie to see what the matter was. But exceedingly amazed to see her cured, they asked her by what meanes she gott the vse of her members: she answered that recommending herselfe to Sainēt Francis, two Religious appeared vnto her and cured her. The bruit of this miracle was incontinently diuulged ouer all the towne. The bishop vnderstanding therof, with a great multitude of people accompanied the said girle to the Church of the Freer Minors, to giue thanks

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kes to God and S. Francis for this gracious benefitt. The girle seeing the image of S. Francis in the Church, poynting theratt with her hand, she said a loud: behold him that hath deliuered me from the perill of death and cured me. In the citty of Cumbre, in the kingdome of Portugall, the neece of one that was deuout vnto S. Francis and his Order, was playing on the riuer side of Modego, and entring into the water, was carryed away with the streame, euen to the middes of the riuer: her vncke with other of her kinred seeking her, she was found vpon a stone safe and secure in the middes of the water. Whence being fetched with a boat, and asked all the matter, she answered that two Religious of S. Francis who her Father the night before had lodged in his house, had saued her from being drowned. Thus did the holy Father S. Francis requite this his affectionate freind for his deuotion in entertayning his Religious into his house.

And saued a girle from drowning.

This ensuying is taken out of the twelfth chap. of the tenth booke.

T Here was a woman in Almanian that by the merittes of S. Francis obtayned of God a malechilde: this boy playing in the street and his mother beholding him, as she sate at the dore of her house, there came a possessed man that audaciouslie and impudentlie attempted publicly to force this woman, but she shifting in to her house violently shutt the dore against him. The possessed partly perceauing that the mother was escaped, tooke the child and with his diuileish force rent it in peeces and went his way. The poore mother in meane while went to the windoe to see if her sonne had no hurt; but perceauing him so dismembred, she filled the aire with sighes; and comming speedily downe, she assembled all the members of her child into her lap, and with a strong faith carryed them to the Church of S. Francis, who a litle before had obtayned him for her, where hauing layd him on the altare; with great courage she vttered these wordes. Glorious Sainct that hast obtained this child forme of God, restore him me againe att this present I beseech thee; for I beleue and hope that his diuine maiestie will not deny thee such a fauour. This strong faith was not frustrated of what it expected, for in an instant, the members of the child were miraculously revnited together, and the child restored to his life and beauty, to the exceeding admiration and encrease of deuotion in all persons. This miracle remayned a long time pictured in the citty of Bolonia.

S. Francis by his merittes reuineth a dismembred child.

How S. Francis and S. Antony deliuered a lady from dispaire. Taken out of the 12. chapter of the tenth booke.

IN the kingdome of Portugall, and citty of Liuaréz, the lady of the place called Lopez, had for gouerneisse a deuill, in disguise of a woman, by whose counsaile she practised most horrible cruelties on her subiectes, and most enormous sinnes in her selfe: but following the custome of most women, she was very deuout vnto the SS. & particularly to S. Francis and S. Antony of Padua. Now she falling greiuously sick, and by reason of her enormous sinnes committed running into dispaire, she had no care of spirituall phisicians, nor of other Sacramentes; whervpon the SS. mentioned hauing pitty on her, came to visit her, and hauing saluted her, began to comfort her, and to persuaue her to be confessed; but they litle auayled, for she alleaged that her sinnes were such & so haynous as could not be pardoned. And therfore the elder of the two SS. told her that if she would confesse & haue contrition of her sinnes, he would be contéted to take her sinnes on himselfe, and to satisfie God for her, yea and would make her participant of all the good deedes he had done during his life, and finally would in the name and part of God promise her eternall life. These wordes put her in good hope, whervpon of a wolfe she became a meeke lambe, with exceeding contrition doinge penance for all her sinnes; hauing made a generall confession to one of the two: And hauing receaued the holy Sacramentes by their Minister, she by their owne handes was vested in the habitt of the Frere Minors; which done, they disappeared; they who saw them, esteemed them by their comportment and gestures, to be S. Francis and S. Antony. A few dayesafter their departure, this woman dyed very piously, and commaunded her body to be buried in the Church of the Freere Minors, some league distant from the said citty of Liuaréz. That very night a foot man of hers returning from abroad, as the day began to breake, there appeared a shaddow before him, and he coniuring it in the name of the liuing God, it answered that he was the deuill, that for fourteene yeares had serued the lady Lopez in shape of a woman: and that by right he had gotten and pourchached her; but that att the end of her life, there presented themselues vnto her two Religious wearing the Capuce whome she much affected, who so preuailed that they conuerted her to penance for her sinnes, and against all right, wrested her soule out of his power, and carried it with them vnto glory: But that thou mayest know this to be true, (said the deuill) when thou shalt come to Liuaréz, where she is dead, thou shalt finde a rumour among

among the people, by reason of a locke-smith that had killed his wife, who being taken vpon the fact shalbe hanged, and I that haue bin cause therof, shall gaine their soules, and carrie them with me into hell. So that for orie soule which I haue lost, I shall gaine twoo. The footman endinge his iorney, found what the deuill had told him to be true, and therefore to all personnes recounted this discourse.

*How the mentionned Saintes hindered a woman from hanging her selfe.
Taken out of the 23. chapter of the tenth booke.*

AN other woman of Portugall named Sara, being verie deuout to the said Saintes, was cruellie tormented by her husband; for besides his queanes which he entertayned in his house, the bread and wine which he gaue her were iniuries and bastonadoes. Now being herevpon one day run into extreme despaire, she fastened a corde about the beame of her chamber, and hauing made a bowe to put about her necke and to hang her selfe, she heard some ruelie knocke att the dore and calling to haue it hastily opened, wherfore hiding here corde, she found that they were two Religious, who prayed her to giue them entertaynement for that night in her house. She demanded who they were, and how they were called; they answered that they were two-frere Minors of a farre country, the one called Francis, and the other Antony; she presently replied, that she would willingly entertaine them for the deuotion she had to S. Francis himselfe, and to S. Antony; and so hauing admitted them, she did accommodate them a chamber wherin to sleep, resoluing for that night to deferre to hange her selfe, for reuerence vnto those seruantes of God. But the SS. about midnight appeared to her husband, and said: God hath sent vs in his behalfe to aduertise thee, that if thou doe not conuert thee from thy sinnes, shake off thy lewd retinue, and liue in peace with thy wife, who is very deuout vnto vs, thou shalt die within three dayes, and be buried in hell, sith thou art cause that this euening she would haue hanged her selfe, if we had not come to preuent her: arise therefore instantlie, and in token that this is true, goe speedilie to thy house, and aske thy wife for the corde wherwith she would strangle her selfe. This miserable husband, being by these wordes full of contrition, went to find his wife in his house, who att her rising missing the Religious, was in exceeding admiration, how they should goe forth shee keeping the key of the dore which she opened to her husband, that

then knocked, who humbly demanding the corde wherewith she would haue hanged her selfe that night, she knew not what to answer: her husband recounted her all, how she had bin preleuered by S. Francis and S. Antony, thenceforward she liued with him in peace and piously, to the great contentment of the poore woman, who was verie thankfull to the Saintes.

How the glorious Father S. Francis held a chapter With his Religious in vision. Taken out of the 18. chapter of the tenth booke.

THere was a Frere Minor in Tholchane, for his owne particular of very austere life, who being rayled to gouernement, perceauing many yong gentlemen daily to enter into Religion, and many other other desirous to enter, if there were place commodious to entertaine them, determined to erect a great and sumptuous Monasterie: Which hauing done, he left the litle house wherin he formerly resided. Now the glorious Father saint Francis appeared to him one night in vision, and said: Come with me: he answered: whither? and he replied: to our Monastery, goeing towards the first he answered that it was ruined. The S. then said, come only with me, I know well whither I am to goe; and so following him, he came to a Chapter, where it seemed to him that the S. called all the Religious by one and one, and that according to their manner, they confessed their faultes vnto him, yea and that he heard some to accule themselues of carnall sinnes, others of disobedience, others to haue infringed their first vowe of pouerty; of whome the first and second it seemed that the S. with compassion pardoned, only admonishing them to be wary thenceforward not to fall into the like, but did cruelly chastice those that had transgressed the vow of pouerty; which this Religious much admiring, most humbly prayed the S. to tell him the cause. The S. answered him, that the rule gaue a sufficient punishment to the lasciuious, and such as disobey their Superiours, who will enforce them to obedience, therefore it only needeth to admonish them in good sort. But said he, the precious stone of my holy pouerty, is now of each one trodden ynder foot, as well the great as litle, esteeme it contemptible and misprize it, wherfore I must my selfe redresse it: then addresing himselfe to this Religious, and thou, said he, that hast so rashlie presumed to build a sumptuous Monasterie, and to destroe mine owne so precious and poore, shalt not escape the wrath of God. But the Guardian in his owne excuse alleadged that he did it not of himselfe, and that by the grace of God he affected not those worldlie honours, but had onlie consented thereto for the commodity of other

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Religious. Therefore, said he, doest thou merit a double punishment, considering that being austere in thine owne behalfe, and accommodating they selfe vnto others; thou doest not care to damne thine owne soule: which said he vanished. And what after became of the said Guardian is not knowne.

How S. Francis appeared in vision, deciding who were his Religious, and who not, in the presence of our Lord Iesus Christ, sitting as Iudge. Taken out of the seauententh chapter of the tenth booke.

IN the primitive time of the Order, there happened a very horrible accident on this subiect in England; which was thus, there being a Religious of saint Francis very contemplatiue, who for the merites of his deuotions was often rapt into extasie: his Guardian seeing him so to remayne a whole day and weeping, said vnto him, I command you brother, vpon holy obedience to retourne to your selfe from the extasie you are in. Hauing heard the word of obedience, he incontinently came to himselfe, and tooke refection according to his necessity: hauing resumed his spirittes, the Superiour commanded him againe vpon obedience to tell him what he had seene that caused him so bitterly to weepe, which seemed vnto him merely extraordinary: for the property of mentall extasie is to cause ioy, and not sorrow and lamentation. The Religious thus constraigned, began to recount vnto him saying: O Father, I saw our Sauour IESVS CHRIST sitting on a very high throne with an incredible Maiesty attended with all his celestiall guard to execute his iudgement. Then in an instant I saw to appeare all degrees of men and women, and saw, which I would neuer haue beleueed, many Religious, and many Preistes also condemned as worldlinges among whome I saw a Religious of our Order that had a delicate and sensuall habitt, who being demaunded of what Religion he was, he answered that he was a Religious of the Order of saint Francis. Wherefore the mighty Iudge turning to S. Francis asked him if it were true that this Religious were one of his. He answered that he was none of his Religious, because his woare no habittes so fine and sensuall, but poore and patched, and so the wretch was sodenly throwne into hell: after him came an other, accompayned with many seculer Gentlemen, the S. denied him also to be any of his, affirming that his Religious applyed themselues to prayer and other spirituall excises, and not to vaine seculer conuersations, and so he was condemned as the other, as also the third, because he came with a great quantity of curious bookes: after these there came one very expert in contriuing lofty and sumptuous buildinges, who was sent for an architect into

into hell. Finallie there came one miserably cloathed and ragged, who fell on his knees, affirming himselfe to be a wretched sinner vnworthy of life: but demaunded mercie of God. S. Francis, ioyfullie receaued him into his armes, and conducted him with him into Paradise, saying to our Lord, this is one of my Frere Minors; and then the vision disappeared: now this is the cause of mine extraordinary teares.

Here ensueth an order of the nine principall vertues of this glorious S. wherby he merited to obtaine such worthy graces of God:

Taken out of the second chapter of the third booke.

After the miracles and apparitions which the holy Father S. Francis made to those that were deuout vnto him, it shall not be amisse to recount also the vertues wherby he merited to obtayne of God such graces and so notable giftes, which also he daily obtayneth, according to what the blessed Brother Iuniperus his disciple writeth therof. The first vertue then was his great contrition, confession, and satisfaction for his sinnes, and his care to auoyd them afterward. The second, was the admirable affection he had towardes his neighbour, and the compasion he had of him in effect and in word, and especially in his interiour; in that he esteemed euery one farre aboue himselfe, taking for his ground this argument, that hauing offended the soueraigne Creatour, who so much loued vs, as that for our loue alone he would take on him humane flesh, he therefore participated himselfe with euery creature, and so did voluntarily obey all, not only his Superiours, equals and inferiours, but, as faire soorth as was lawfull and possible, all creatures. The third, was a separation of heart, from all terrestriall and transitory thinges; for he was vnited to IESVS CHRIST alone, who had created him, and whome alone he desired: Wherfore he in such sort exercised himselfe herein, that it was so easy for him to sequester himselfe from terrestriall thinges, and to haue his spirit allwayes addressd vnto God, that it seemed his flesh had the same will with his spirit. The fourth, was the incredible pacience wherewith he endured all his afflictions and al the iniuries that were laid vpon him, endeauouring to loue them that iniuryed him, mortifying his proper sences, and receauing all as from the hand of God: for as he beleueed that all good proceeded from the diuine liberality, so did he beleuee that the affliction which he endured was for his sinnes, and that God meant to chastice him in this lif & not in the other. The fift was his loue vnto the good and the great compasion he had of the wicked, reputing himselfe much lesse then they; for he would say, that the end was not yet seene when the good might become wicked & the wicked good. When he heard any one detracted, either he would excuse him, or would shew that

that he disliked it, so that he would putt the detractour to silence, or chaunge the discourse. The sixt, was that he loued to be reprehended, for which he was verie thanckfull; Neuertheles he was verie vnwilling to reprehend, though he were verie zealous of the honour of God, of the good of his neighbour, and of the obseruance of the rule; yet to auoide obligation to reprehend, he renounced the office of Generall. The seauenth, was that he serued each one, with a pure will and very great affection; though he would neuer permitt himselfe to be serued, but in extreme necelsity; reputing himselfe vnworthy to be serued: alleading that IESVS CHRIST said, that he came not to be serued, but to serue. And if any one in any necessity serued him, he would in his heart giue thanckes to God for giuing will and power to that Religious to serue him. The eight was, that he endeauoured to conserue in his memorie, the graces which he had receaued of his diuine maiestie, as also the vniuersall benefitts exhibited to al other creatures, for which he was alwayes thanckfull for himselfe and all others. Att the end of this thanckelgiuing, he ordinarily accused himselfe, discending to the knowledge of himselfe and ascending to that of God, reputing himselfe vnworthy to giue him thanckes, as by these wordes he often signified: But who am I, that presume to giue thanckes for others, I, I say, that am not able to thanck him for the least grace he hath done me, and am also such an abhominable sinner? The ninth and last vertue, was the guard of his tongue, which is the hight of all good, as being the verie gate of life and death, according as it is employed: without the guard wherof all good also is lost. In respect wherof he was alwayes very carefull that his wordes should fauour of truth, humility, pouerty chastity, goodnes, benedictiō, prayse of God and his neighbour: & so he merited to be in like sort blessed of God & mē, world without end. Amen.

How the glorious body of the Seraphicall Father S. Francis, was buried in the city of Assisium. This is taken out of the first chapter of the tenth booke, and here placed for conclusion of the second booke.

THere is no man but knoweth that the glorious body of the Seraphicall Father S. Francis, is buried in his owne monasterie in the city of Assisium, but yet after an ordinarie manner: for it is not otherwise knowne in what place it is in the said church: bnt that it is in a great chappell vnder the earth vnder the high altare, and that lampes are putt in att a windoe to lighten that place where the sacred body repositeth, as is also reported of saint Iames of Galicia, that he is buried so farre vnder ground, that none can come att him. We must beleue that God hath so disposed, to the end such pre-

cious treasures by whose merittes it pleaseth his diuine maiesty daily to work such and so great miracles might not be robbed or ruinated by any alteration or disaltious euent of warre or other euill accident. Now we desiring to content the readers, and not to omitt any matter in this worck that may be desired and is possible to be performed, we haue so dilligentlie searched and enformed our selues, that we haue gotten knowledge that the true relation of what may be desired concerning this subiect, fell into the handes of the great Capitaine Gonzales, Heruandez de Cordoua, in his conquest made of Calabria and the kingdome of Naples for his Catholique maiesty, and therefore we haue so much laboured with importunities and industrie, that at length we obayned the same, it being this that ensueth, read it with contentment.

A true and faithfull discourse wherby appeareth how the glorious Father S. Francis is buried. translated out of the latin originall, which fell into the handes of the great Capitaine Gonzales Heruãdez de Cordoue, in his conquest made of the kingdome of Naples.

*To the right reuerenced Antony Bishop of Andria, Francis Bencie
Duke of Andria; Health.*

THe charge which it hath pleaseth you to lay on me, to commit to writing the visitation which the sanctity of Pope Nicolas the first personally made of the glorious body of the Seraphicall Father S. Francis, being on the one side ouerburdensome vnto me in regard of the great feeblenes of my spiritt, hath neuerthelesse for other considerations bin very easie and contentfull, as well in that this labour is pious and deuout, as because I am to present it vnto you; to you I say, who were present when it was related vnto vs, so that you are able to correct it and supply that wherein mine endeaour may faile. So I beseech my sweet lord I E S V S C H R I S T, for whose prayse and glorie I haue attempted to dictate this discourse, to afford me the grace worthily to discharge my duety herein: I beseech him I say, by the merittes of this glorious S. of whose body I am to treat, considering that it is not conuenient to burry in silence so great a miracle, wherein God doth manifest so great bounty and omnipotencie. Your reuerence and my Lord Iames Bishop of Laquidonia being with me the eighth day of march, as you conferred together walking and often resting your selues, as the manner is in discoursing of some admirable accident; I came neere you, and prayed you to make me participant of your
discour.

discourse if I were worthy and my request lawfull: the said Lord James then said vnto me: My Lord Duke, if you knew wherof we did talke you would also admire and wonder. Then did I very instantlie entreat him to tell me the occasion of such admiration. Whereto the said Lord answered that he would willinglie doe it: but that he rather desired to weepe when such things are recounted and to heare the of an other, then to relate them himselfe. Neuertheles he neither could nor would omit to content me and leet me know that their admiration was not without subiect: considering withall that it was a matter worthy to be knowne, but not of all persons, therefore making me partaker therof, he thus began his discourse. My Lord Duke, you must vnderstand that I was one of the seruantes of the deceased Eustergio of worthy and blessed memorie, Cardinal of the title of S. Eusebius Archbishop of Beneuentum: who approaching to the pangs and agony of death, yea arriuing to that priuation of naturall heat and vigour, that we much feared he could not liue a day: about midnight I heard him with a loud voice to cry: O S. Francis! then staying a while, with groanes and sighes he redoubled, O Francis! O Francis: wherewith he much amazed vs all: but none of vs durst approach to aske him to demaund the reason for feare to trouble him, but were attentue to see the successe of this frequent inuocation. I, that exceedingly loued him, wept bitterly with him, and for him mentally inuocated the Sainct to whome I haue euer had a particuler deuotion: but this had no other successe sauing that the next morning, when we supposed to prepare his obsequies, he began to amend: and the phisicians likewise conceaued better hope of him, he hauing alwayes esteemed me for one of his most affectionate seruantes, hauing bin then a very small time absent from the Court, to yeld due residence to an Abbey which he had bestowed on me: knowing well that he had bin with his Holines to visit the body of the glorious S. Francis, and desiring to heare the discourse, as also knowing that att other times he had much desired that I should vnderstand the same, but no occasion was euer presented to demaunde it of him: Now taking this occasion of his frequent inuocation of the Sainct, I began first readily to aske him the cause, then att length I freelie discoursed, and humble requested him breifely to relate vnto me, how he had seene that glorious body in his Church. Wherevpon he graciouslie answered me in these wordes: know Abbot, if thou wert not deere vnto me as I hold thee to be, I would not impart it vnto thee, much lesse to any man in the world: we that were there present hauing expresse commandement of his holines to the contrary: and therefore by reason of that prohibition I will not tell thee the place where it is, but am

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well content to tell thee what I ſaw. Thou ſhalt then vnderſtand that in the yeare 1449. Pope Nicolas the ſiſt, who with an ineſtimable providence governed the holy Church, going for certaine affaires of great importance to Allſium, or according to the opinions of ſome meely and expresly to viſitt this glorious body, ſent Sir Peter of Nocelon his Secretary, to giue the Guardian of the place vnderſtanding therof, who aſſembling his Religious communicated vnto him the intention of his holineſſe. Vpon conſultation wherof they were exceedingly buſied, for fearing on the one ſide that his holineſſe would take and tranſport it to Rome: and on the other, not daring to contradiſt him, they knew not well how to reſolue to anſweare his holines: but that the ſaid Secretary being very prudent and diſcreet, conſidering the anguiſh wherein the Religious were, made anſweare of himſelfe, and returning to the Pope told him in their behalfe, that none of his predeceſſours nor the holy Apoſtolick Sea hauing attempted the ſame, they knew not well how to reſolue, much fearing that he would deſprie them of that precious treaſure of their Father: which the Pope vnderſtanding, he returned his Secretary to ſecure them and putt them out of that doubt. The Religious then accorded that he ſhould freely come about midnight: but moſt humbly beſeeching him to come attended only with two or three perſonnes. A biſhop of Fraunce that was then neere his Sanctity hearing this, was much ſcandalized, ſaying that this was as it were to contradiſt and to limitte the Apoſtolick authority: and that if his holineſſe did what thoſe Religious required, it were to giue ill example to the world, and aduiſed him not to endure it. The Pope anſweared him, that hauing good intention, he would not haue it eſteemed euill without ſubieſt: and ſo much the rather becauſe they had very great reaſon for it, being alſo requiſite to goe into holy places with great humility, wherby he hoped to obtaine of this S. that, for which he expresly went att that time. And therfore he choſe only the ſaid Biſhop, my ſelfe, and his ſaid Secretary, and commaunded the Guardian to take the like number of his Religious to be preſent with him att the ſaid viſitation. Now as we expected the hower, the Guardian preuenting it came about three of the clock att night vnto his holines, and hauing kiſſed his feet conducted him by diuers turnings to a groſſe wall but lowe, whither being come the three Religious which he had brought, began to breake the wall, ſo that thy made a hole ſitt for vs to paſſe commodiouſly through: we then began there to conſider, that vnto the place where the body of S. Francis was, there was a long rew of ſteppes of marble, by which going we came co a tombe made in forme of a vault vnder earth, where the Guardian kneeling downe gaue a burning torch into the hand of his holines, that he might
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the more securely enter. Att the higher part of the vault we found a dore some what lowe, that was of brasse very strong, hauing three grosse barres of iron, with their lockes that shutt very curiously, and three great chaines of iron that crossed the dore: which being opened, there issued an odour so precious and rare, that none of vs either felt or shall feele a sweeter on earth. The Guardian then with his knee on the ground said to his holines, that he might enter att his pleasure, he entred alone (we remayning without where we discoursed of diuers spirituall thinges) and falling incontinently to the ground before the feet of the S. he began to sigh, groane and weep so bitterly and so sorely, that so persisting a good space, we began to feare, that some accident had befallen him: We then determind to enter to withdraw him, but that hauing of himselfe chaunged his lamentation into ioy, which was an euident signe that he had obtayned of this glorious S. some grace of importance; he called vs all in, desiring to see the said place and to conferre with vs therof, and so entring we fell on our knees, and abbreuiating our deuotious to be lesse troublesome to his holines, arising vp, and lifting our eyes on high we remayned all amazed. O how inscrutable, freind Abbott, (said the Cardinall) are the wayes, of God! and how distant and different are his iudgements from all humane prudence! who in his life hath euer seene or heard of a body so many yeares dead, to remayne and stand vpright on his feet without any rest or stay? It is no baulme, nor any drith of naturall coldnes, but an only supernaturall and euidently diuine vertue, that thus supporteth this holy body as if it were liuing, in such sort as we haue seene it. We may well acknowledge that the hand of God is no more abridged in his behalfe then if he were liuing, seeing that he is truely liuing, aliuie I say in God, aliuie in vertues, aliuie in miracles, and aliuie in image, gesture and flesh: so that only breath, yea breath alone is wanting. But to tell your particularly and by order: Know Abbott, that this place is made in forme of a litle chappell with three arched vaultes, that in the midst seemed to be miraculously made, were it in respect of the walles standing or pauement, hauing in the midst a stone wheron the glorious body of the S. stood vpright on his feet as I haue said, with his face to wardes the west, & his eyes eleuated towards heauē, which they very attentiuely beheld as he accustomed in his life. His handes were ioyned one in an other within the sleeues of his habitt, after the māner of the Freer Minors, & rested on his brest. This body was in all partes as entier and exempt from corruption as the first day of his death. On the other side of this vault, stood an other body likewise vpright, and cloathed in the habitt of S. Dominick, who seemed to pray with his handes ioyned on high, and his eyes fixed towards the feet of S. Francis, and

*The stig-
mates of
S. Franc.
appeared
fresh on
his body.*

they were so liuelie & cleare, that to neither of both there wanted but speech. They yielded such and so gracious a sauour that it could hardlie be supported: for it was so admirable subtile and penetrant, that it raniſhed our ſpirittes into extaiſe. Now the Pope hauing well ſeene and duely conſidered all this, fell againe on his knees before the ſaid body of S. Francis, then very reuerently liſted vp one ſide of his habitt, for the other ſide was faſt vnder his foot which he would not pull vp, becauſe it could not conueniēdie be done without ſtirring the whole body: wherefore he contented himſelfe to diſcouer only the other foot, which was all bare without landale. O happy were our eyes, that then deſerued to behold the ſacred ſtigmates which God himſelfe with his owne handes imprinted in his deerly beloued! Happy doubtles are the vnderſtandings that can att their pleaſure contemplate them: for the wound was as fresh on the middeſt of ther foot, as if it had bin made att that verie hower, with the hard nayle vpon the bare fleſh: and the bloud appeared exceeding full of life. O happy were the ſoules that were held worthy to ſee in his ſeruant, what they could not ſee in their Lord IESVS CHRIST! and more when afterwarde they ſaw his ſacred handes, which his Holines diſcouered and ſaw pearced as the feet, and hauing alſo the like nailles: we alſo kiſſed them laying our impure lippes on the ſacred bloud that was yet very fresh: which made vs to poore our teares, that ſo abundantly fell from our eyes, as that they hindered our cōtēment; for we could not taſt nor enioy the ſame according to our wiſh: our eyes were ſo troubled that we often ſaw not that precious treaſure. But who cā euer explicate the motiō of our vnderſtāding, the abſtraſtiō of our ſpirit, the melting of our ſences, and the faintnes of our corporall forces, procured by this precious ſight? O thrice happy the mouthes of vs ſo greiuous ſinners, wherewith we were permitted to kiſſe that ſacred wound of his foot, with ſuch interiour cōſolation as none could be more! But ſeauen fold more happy the Pope, who alone kiſſed the wound of his ſide, ſhowered as a fresh roſe, & conſequētly his very mouth; wher-vpon he graciously vttered theſe wordes: O moſt worthy & excellēt memoriall of our redemption, wherewith the eternall God would that conformably to our Lord I. C. the glorious Father S. Fr. ſhould be deputed aliue & dead to repreſent to the world, euen till the laſt day of iudgmēt, the ſigne of his dolorous paſſion! O holy woundes firſt endured by the Sonne of God for the ſinnes of men! and after for our benefitt renewed in his holy ſeruant Francis! O moſt gracious God! to whome haſt thou euer ſhewē ſuch loue but to this thy moſt faithfull ſeruant? Blessed ſainct, thou haſt really carried the triumphant ſtander of the croſſe, together with the liuely marckes of his paſſion. Finally thou alone haſt ben elected and found worthy to be pearced in true imitation of our Lord I. C.

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differing from him only in this, that he receaued his woundes of the wicked Iewes, and thou of our Redeemer I. C. O extreme benefite! O singuler gift! O ineffable prerogatiue! Fr. who taught thee to serue God? in what new scoole was it performed? and by what merueillous doctrine? Of what master hast thou learned to moue to so high a degree of perfection, that neuer S. of either sex could equall thee in the giftes of God? The Pope vttered these and many other wordes, being rauished out of himselfe in the presence of this S. of God, himselfe together with vs bathing the pauement of that holy place with abondance of our teares. Now we so persisted in these sweet cōceptes, that whē we least thought thereon, one aduertised vs that it was neere day, and that it was necessary for vs to depart, to shutt vp the hole of the sacred sepulcher dexteriously which touched our hart as a deadly wound, the space of six or seauen howers that we were there, seeming to haue flowen and not passed away. Making therefore some litle prayer more, and recommending our selues to the S. the Pope first going out we all followed, but not till we had opened the two vaultes in the two other arches, where we saw the two other glorious bodies of his disciples, entier also and very odoriferous, but much lesse then that of their master; hauing their habittes of sackcloth. At the entry we saw the body of the blessed Brother Giles, then we came forth, and the Guardian shutt the dores, praying his Holines to keepe the same in great secrecie: which he promised him, and commāded vs also the same. This, my freind Iames, was the cause of my inuocation that night, when I cryed, O Francis! Francis! hauing yet hope, yea very confident, that he wilbe protectour of my soule before God att my departure. But it seemeth indeed very admirable that this glorious S. had not procured his recouery, but that he might haue declared this his glory to many his deuoted freindes that much desired to vnderstand it: for this discourse ended he began so to decay that he dyed the night following, leauing assured testimony of this truth, considering that it is not to be beleueed nor thought, nor is it probable, that a man especially such as this being in the conflictes of death, would for his pleasure and without occasion faine a false matter, the time so neere when he should most strictly render an account vnto God, who seuerely condemneth the culpable and ill-deseruers, as he crowneth the saintes, his elected here on earth, but much more in heauen, there glorifying their bodies & their soules with his glorious vision eternally; whither I beseech him by his grace to conduct vs, where he is three and one, and liueth and reigneth world without end, Amen.

Brother
Giles
also.

The end of the second booke.

THE



THE THIRD BOOKE
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS,

CONTAYNING A TREATISE OF S.

*Bonauenture of certaine miracles of the glorious
Father S. Francis after his death.*

With a discourse of the Author, of the degrees wherby the
S. attained to perfection. Translated by the
parties afore mentioned.

Of the miracle of the Stigmates.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



O the honour and glory of almighty God,
and the blessed Father S. Francis. Being to
write certaine miracles of his, wrought after
his glorification in heauen, we haue determi-
ned to begin with that immensue priui-
ledge giuen him by our Lord IESVS
CHRIST, honouring him with the signe
of the crosse and passion. This glorious
Father S. Francis, was then eminent by a new
miracle, when he appeared characted and
illustrated with so singuler a priuiledge, neuer
before graunted to any creature, I meane the sacred woundes of our
Lord, which made his mortall bodie like to that of IESVS CHRIST
crucified, the sacred stigmates considered, wherof whatsoeuer any hu-
mane tongue can expresse, is litle or nothings in comparison of so
sublime,

sublime and worthy a mystery, wrought by his diuine maiesty in his faithfull seruant Francis; that this signe of the crosse which he alwayes carried imprinted in his hart, from the beginning of his conuersion, might also exteriorly appeare in his body entierly vnited in the said crosse, and that as his soule was interiorly vested with I E S V S CHRIST, the habite of a penitent which he tooke representing the image of the crosse, the body also might in like sort be inuested with the said sacred signe, and that with such colours and distinctions he might the more courageously serue his God, as his principall Capitaine, in the spirituall warre and army, wherein God had ouercome the powers of spirituall enemies. Yea and diuers misteries of the crosse, appeared in the S. from his first beginning in spirituall warfare, as in the discourse of his life plainly appeareth, by the diuers apparitions of the crosse which he had. And for farther assurance of the verity of so admirable a fact, God did not only giue testimonies worthy of credit, that saw and with their owne handes touched, those holy stigmata during his life: but did manifest them euen by merueillous apparitions, and miracles wrought after the death of the glorious Father, as hereafter we shall orderly discourse, besides what hath bin formerly said, vpon the doubt of Pope Gregory the ninth, in the nine and fiftieth chapter of the second booke.

A Religious Freer Minor, and Preacher very famous in regard of the admiration of many vertues that excelled in him, beleeued att first the mystery of the sacred stigmata which the holy Father had: neuertheless being desirous to know by humane reason the occasion of such a miracle, he began to doubt therof; so that growing dayly more scrupulous his doubt encreased of so manifest a verity: Wherefore one night as he slept, S. Francis appeared vnto him, hauing his feet couered with dirt, and a countenance humbly austere, and patiently angry who said, what combatt doe thy cogitations cause thee? what turpitude hath so absolutely possessed thee? behold my handes and feet. But the Religious, though he saw the woundes of his handes, with their nailes, could not yet perceauie those of his feet, because they were couered with dirt: wherefore the S. said vnto him, put of the dirt from my feet, and behold the woundes of the nayles: and so the Religious deuoutly taking hold of his holy feet, seemed to make them cleane, and with his handes to touch the said woundes; after which awaking, he found himselfe all bathed with teares, and being cleared of all his scrupulous cogitations, he publicly confessed his errour, with a firme beleefe of such an assured verity, crauing pardon therof att the handes of God and his Saint.

How the doubt of the sacred stigmata was cleared from a Freer Minor & preacher.

Of other miracles, of the stigmates of the holy Father S. Francis.

THE II. CHAPTER.

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so be-
leeue.*

A Vertuous Gentlewoman of Rome, hauing chosen the holy Father S. Francis for her aduocate, and hauing vpon this occasion placed his image in her oratory, beholding it one time, and seeing that it had not the sacred stigmates, she began in admiration to complaine, and not thincking it to be the fault of the painter that had neglected to make them, she for many dayes had purposes to search out the cause of this defect; but those admirable signes one day appeared in an instant in that image, as they are accustomed to be paynted in all other. This Gentlewoman perceauing it, filled with feare and admiration, called her daughter who was very yong and deuout, and had dedicated her selfe vnto God, and asked her if she remembered that she had formerly seene in that image those stigmates that then appeared. The daughter did sweare that she had neuer seene them, and that they came there miraculously: But the soule of man often seeking occasion to fall, calling the verity in doubtr, there entred an other scruple into the hart of this gentlewoman, contrary to the former; which was that the said stigmates had euer bin in the said image, but that she had not well obserued it. God intending not to haue his first miracle misprised, added a second, permitting the said stigmates to vanish againe and the image to remayne as before, and so the first miracle was confirmed by the second.

Att the City of Lorio in *Catalonia*, there was a man named Iohn, very deuout vnto the holy Father S. Francis, who passing one night through a street where certaine lewd persons attended to murder their enemy that was to passe that way, who was a freind to the said Iohn, and did resemble him; so supposing him to be their ennemy in person, they assaulted him, and so wounded him, that they left him on the ground for dead, there remayning in him no hope of life; for the first blow cutt as it were cleane off one arme; besides a stabbe that had pearced him thorough, vnder the breast, so that the winde which issued thence blew out six burning candelles ioyned together: wherevpon the Phisicians presently iudged him for dead, and as such forsooke him; his woundes daily putrifying, the loathsome matter that issued out of his body was so intollerable, that euen his wife could no longer endure it: wherefore seeing that all humane helpe was out of hope, he had recourse to his Patron, and to the blessed virgin, whome he had very confidently and courageously inuocated att the instant of his wound-
ing

ing. Now this miserable afflicted thus lying in his bed, accompanied only with his misery, did in a manner continually weepe and often calling on the holy Father S. Francis, there one day appeared vnto him a man in habitt of a Freer Minor, who as it seemed to him, entred att the window, and calling him said, know Iohn that because thou hast had confidence in me, God will cure thy woundes. Which the afflicted man hearing, he prayed him to lett him know who he was that brought him such gratefull newes: he answered that he was Brother Francis; who comming neere him vnbound his woundes, and annoynted them with a precious oyntment: which doing the sick man felt such vertue to proceed out of his sacred handes, that he perceaued himselfe manifestly to be healed, and so att an instant, from halfe dead, and already sauouring, he was restored and cured; for his putrification was by the vertue of the signes of the passion of our Sauour, chaunced into sweet sauour, and the flesh of his woundes in such sort renewed that he was absolutely cured: which done the Sainct disappeared, and the good man arose from his bed with great ioy to prayle God, and the blessed Sainct: then called his wife with so stronge a voice that she was vtterly amazed, knowing that she had left him in his bed with so litle courage that scarcely could he vtter a word: but finding him out of his bed and cured, whome she thought to bury the next day, she was much more amazed, wherefore she so cryed out in admiration of the miracle, that she was heard of all the neighbours. Those of his family att first supposing him to be frantike, prayed him to retourne to his bed, for they could not be perswaded that he was cured; but he hauing shewed them his body sound, they were exceedingly abashed, being of opinion that he whome they saw was not Iohn, but a phantasticall spirit or vision, which conceat neuer ceased in them till he had recounted the whole progresse of the miracle, which being diuulged ouer the city, the people abundantly flocked to see this man and the notable miracle, wrought by the sacred stigmates of S. Francis, ad all replenished with ioy and admiration, with one accord extolled the prayles of the Stander bearer of IESVS CHRIST, who being dead of body, neuertheles liued in the other life, so that by the admirable demonstration of his presence, and the sweet touch of his handes, he raised, as may be said, one already dead by meane of his more then humane markes, with which our soueraigne Redeemer raised the Christian people already dead eternally by sinne.

*One
wounded
to death
cured by
the sa-
cred stig-
mates of
S. Franc.*

Of an other miracle of the Stigmates of S. Francis.

THE III. CHAPTER.

IN the citty of Potencia in Apulia, there was a Preist called Roger, a very venerable man, and Canon of the great church, who being by meanes of an infirmity, become very feeble, entred one day into a church to pray, wherein was painted the image of S. Francis, with the stigmates, which beholding he began to conceave a doubt in himselfe of the sublimity of the miracle, as of an inaccustomed thinge and vtterly impossible; his hart being thus wounded with incredulity, he felt att the verie instant such a greiuous peacing of his left hand, within his gloue, that an arrow flyeth not out of a bowe with more force and violence: wherupon being exceedingly amazed with the wound together with the stroake, and yet more with the secrett manner therof, he pulled of his gloue, to see with his eyes, the effect of that which he had heard and felt, and hauing neuer before had any wound in his hand, with admiration he beheld this new wound, whence began to proceed such an extreme paine as he thought therof to dye: it was merueilous to consider, for in the gloue appeared no signe att all but only in the hand, that the wound made secretly in the hand might be correspondent to that which was secrett in the hart. So for the space of two dayes making publicke relation of the occasion, and the secrett of his incredulity, he confessed and with oath affirmed that he beleued the sacred stigmates to be imprinted in S. Francis; he humbly recommended himselfe vnto him, beseeching him, by the vertu of his sacred stigmates, and by the efficacy of his intercession to procure the cession of his paine. Att the end of two dayes his incredulity hauing bin sufficiently punished, God by the merittes of the S. gaue him ease, for the greife entierly ceased, the heat of the hurt was qualified, and no signe of the wound remayned; so that secrett infirmity of the soule was cured by the manifest launce of the flesh: and by diuine providence the body was cured together with the soule: the man remayning humble towards God, deuout to his seruant S. Francis, and affectionate to the Religious of his Order. This so solemne miracle, was assured by autenticall letters from the Bishop of the said citty, sealed with the ordinary seale, that thenceforward none might admitt any doubt of the sacred woundes of the Sonne of God, diuinely imprinted in his seruant Francis, and that no mannes eye should be euill to see that God is good, as if the liberality and gift of this grace, did not corresponde vnto the eternall bounty.

of

Of the dead raised by the merittes of S. Francis.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

IN the citty of Mont-Marón neere to Beneuentum, there dyed a woman of singuler deuotion vnto the glorious Father S. Francis, where the Clergie being assembled the same euenning to sing hir vigiles, the woman arose before them all, & called one of the Preittes there present, saying vnto him: Father I desire to be confessed of one sinne: Know that after my death, I should haue bin cōdemned to the deuil in an obscure & horrible prison, because I neuer confessed a sinne which I now desire to confesse: but the holy Father S. Fr. hauing prayed for me, because I haue euer deuoutly serued him, it is permitted me to retourne to life, that being confessed of this sinne, I may afterward obtaine eternall life with him. And for assurance hereof as soone as I shalbe confessed, and haue absolution, I shall goe to the glory promised. So hauing with exceeding great contrition confessed her sinne, and performed the pénance enioyned by her Confessor all trembling, accommodating her selfe sweetly into her bed, she slept in our Lord.

A woman deuout vnto S. Francis raised to confesse a sinne and then died againe.

In the mountaines of Apulia, in the towne of Parmace, there was a married man, that had one only daughter, young, and exceedingly beloued of himselfe and her mother, who being leasued with an unexpected and greiuous sicknes sodenlie dyed, wheratt the Father and mother being out of hope euer to haue other children, were so afflicted, that they were ready to dye with her. Their kinred and freindes being come to bury and bewayle her; the mother was so sorrowfull and oppressed with greife, that she consumed into teares, yea so gaue way to sorrow, and so employed her selfe in this affliction, that she neither saw nor vnderstood any thing that was done in her house; but as euerie one was thus disquieted, yea void of hope; the holie Father S. Francis with one Religious only appeared to the mother that was deuout vnto him, and in compasionate manner said: Woman cease to lament, for the light of thy candell, whome thou bewaylest as dead, shal by mine intercession be incontinentlie reuiued. Which said he disappeared; and the woman presentlie related what had bin said vnto her by the S. vnto those present, and would not permitt the body of her dead daughter to be carryed to buriali: but coming neere her, and inuocating the name of S. Francis, she lifted her vp aliue and in health in the presence of her kinred and freindes, who gaue thanckes to God and to his blessed seruant.

The only daughter of one deuout vnto S. Francis raised by his merittes.

*A blasphemer
of the
name of
S. Francis
lost his
eldest
sonne,
but re-
penting
the S.
restored
him.*

The Frere Minors of Nocere standing in need of a chariott demanded one of a man named Peter, who in steed of lending them his chariott and affording them the almose which they demanded for the honour of God, and S. Francis, he foolishly answered them, and with iniurious wordes cursed the name of the S. but he soone repented his folly, in regard of what incontinently befell him, which wrought in him a great feare of the wrath of God: for he lost his eldest sonne: who beingeuen then stricken with a disease sodenly dyed, wherefore in an extreme passion that assailed his hart, casting himselfe on the ground and there wallowing, he inuocated the S. with the same mouth that had so indiscreetly blasphemed him, and bitterly weeping said: Father I am he that haue offended, I am he that haue impiously spoaken: thou doest iustlie chasticie me o S. of God! restore the innocent child to him that repenteth his fault, and is ready to doe penance. Punishment is due to him that hath lewdly blasphemed, wherefore I freely giue my selfe to thee, I offer me to serue thee for euer, and to offer vnto God sacrifice of praise to the honour & glory of thy holy name. It was admirable, that att these wordes his sonne arose one his feet, and procuring end to their lamentation that mourned for him, he confidently affirmed that whē he dyed he saw the holy Father S. Francis, who had conducted his soule from the separation of the body, and by their prayers had restored it againe.

*S. Francis
by his
merits
raised a
child.*

The sonne of a Notary att Rome, about the age of seauen yeares, desiring according to the custome to goe with his mother to masse, she vnwilling to permitt him, did shutt him into the house. The child seeing he could not gett out att the dore, leapt out att the window, and fel dead against the ground. The mother that was not gone farre, hearing the fall, returned againe, and seeing the sorrowfull spectacle of her dead sonne, crossing her armes, began to crye out and torment her selfe, thereby mouing all her neighbours to compafsion. Now among them that there assembled, there was a Freer Minor that was goinge to preach in a church nere therevnto; but came first to see this accident, where he said to the Father of the dead child: doe you not beleue that S. Francis, by the great loue which he carryed to IESVS CHRIST crucified to giue liue to mé, can raise thy sonne? The Father answered that he firmly beleueed it, faithfully confessed it, and would for euer remaine seruant to the S. if by his meane he might meritt to obtaine that fauour. The Religious then fell to his prayers, and exhorted all that were present to doe the like, which done the child first began to speake, then opening his eyes, lifted vp his handes, not without exceeding astonishment of all the assistants that attentiuely beheld him. Finally he arose one his feet, and incontinently went to embrace his mother sound and secure,

with-

without any signe of such a fall, which was performed by the vertue of the holy Father S. Francis.

Of other dead, raised by the merittes of the holy Father.

THE V. CHAPTER.

IN the citty of Capua, diuers children playing vpon the water-crane, one of them by mischance fell into the riuer, which being very swift and violent, he sunck instantly to the bottome where he remayned buried in the sand. His companions not knowing how to helpe him began to cry: which the people hearing, they hastened thither from all partes, many inuocating the merittes of S. Francis, in regard that the parêtes of the child were very deuout vnto him, that he would please to asist him. Their prayer being ended, one of them that could swimme, inuocating the name of S. Francis, so laboured in the riuer that he found the place where the child was, couered with sand whome with much sorrow and paine he drew out quite dead, to the exceeding greife of those present, who with loud voice cryed out: S. Francis the true seruant of God, restore this child aliue vnto his Father; yea certaine Iewes being there arriued, induced by a naturall commiseration; likewise prayed vnto him: Att these prayers, the child that had bin dead and lay deformed on the ground, incontinently arose in health and ioyfull as he had come from play, and prayed those present to conduct him to the church of saint Francis, that he might giue thanckes vnto him, acknowledging that by his merittes he had bin raised.

*And an
other
drowned.*

In the citty of Sueffe, there fell downe a house in the Piller-street vnder which was crushed a child that there was present; att the noise of this fall all the neighbours presently hastened, and suspected that which was true, they incontinently remoued the stones, and wood, and foūd the child dead whome they carried to his mother, who seeing it was so ouercome with greife, that she lost her speech. Retourning to herselfe she begā with a sorrowful voice to lamēt, in these wordes: O S. Francis! O glorious S. restore me my child, I beseech thee, by the loue wherewith thou hast serued IESVS CHRIST. This womā did not pray alone, but together all that were present, affectionatly imploring the S. to cōfort this disolate mother, perceiving that this dead body had neither sēce, nor voice, they tooke it & stretched it out to be shrouded, to bury it the day following. But the mother reposing great hope in God that by the merites of the S. her sonne should retoune to life, vowed to couer the Altare of S. Francis with a new ornament and a new altare cloth, & about mid-

*An other
crushed
vnder the
ruines of
an house.*

midnight her child began to gape, and after his dead membres were warmed, in an instant he arole on his feet very sound and well, to the great amazement of all that were present, who prayled and thancked God for the same.

A child of Rogoufe, called Girlaudín, being in a farme att the time of the vintage, going vnder the wine presse, with a vessell to putt wine therin, there fell downe grosse stones and blockes of wood from vpon the said presse, that crushed his head. Att the cry of the child, his father that was neere by came running, but being vnable to helpe his sonne that was couered with the grosse stones and peices of wood, he called the presse-labourers and prayed them to asist him: who hauing compassion of him, drew out the child already dead from vnder the burden, and deliuered him to the extremly afflicted father, who humbly falling prostrate on the earth, prayed our lord, by the great merittes of the holy Father Francis, whose feast was very neere, to restore life to his child; and he made vowes, especially with his sonne being rayled, to visitt the body of the S. God by the merittes of his seruant heard him, but after an admirable manner, for as soone as it pleased God to graunt to this man the fauour he required, att the very same instant the child that was all bruised, appeared perfectly well, and very merrily, reprehending those that wept, and assuring them that his life was restored him by the merittes of S. Francis.

An other.

And another.

An other dead person was rayled in Almaine, wherof Pope Gregory the ninth, by his apostolicall letters att the translation of S. Francis, certified all that were present, and att the generall chapter of the Frere Minors, who vpon this aduertisement ended their chapter with great alacrity. The manner and circumstance of this miracle is not committed to writting, because it is not knowen, neuertheles it is beleueed that the testimony of so holy a Pope much exceedeth in authorithy, all the declarations that may be made therof.

Of such as were deliuered from danger of death, by the seruant of the omnipotent.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THere was a gentleman neere vnto Rome, named Rodulphus, whose wife was very deuout, they willingly entertayned the Frere Minors into their house, as well in forme of hospitality (for they were very charitable) as for the loue and reuerence they carryed to the glorious Father S. Francis. Now it once happened that two Frere Minors being lodged with them, whiles they were a sleep, a sentinell

stinell that kept watch by night on a very high tower, resting againſt a peice of wood that was not well faſtened, the wood and the man fell both from the hight of the ſaid tower, vpon the rooſe of the lodging, and thence to the ground, with ſuch a noiſe that cauſed very many, yea the maſter and miſtreſſe, with the ſaid Frere Minors to haſten thither who found the man ſo fallen, in ſuch a deepe ſleep, that he perceaued not himſelfe to be fallen nor did awake, att the noiſe made by them that came to helpe him: ſo that he was pulled, and called, and att length ſo rudely ſhaken, that he awaked out of that profound ſleep: cōplayning that he had bin diſtoubred of the ſweet reſoſe wherein he was: affirming that he ſlept with extreme contentment in the armes of the glorious Father S. Francis. But when he was ſhewen his fall, and had ſeene whence he came euen to the ground, he was vtterly amazed and beſide himſelfe, to conſider what had happened vnto him without any knowledge of his till the preſente. Wherefore he promiſed vnto God before them all, in acknowledgement of ſo worthy a benefitt, to doe penance, for the fauour afforded vnto him by the merittes of the glorious Father S. Francis.

*A man
fallen
from the
hight of a
tower,
had no
hurt, by
the me-
rites of
S. Franc.*

In the towne of Pophy, in Campania, a Preiſt called Thomas, going to repaire a mill appertayning to the church ſciuat on the border of the riuer, he fell by miſchance vnder the wheele of the mill, which by violence of his motion carryed him downe, and held him in the current, with his face vpward, without power to moue or ſpeake by reaſon that the water which draue the wheele fell on his face, ſo that he could not vtter one word. Wherefore he called in his hart for help vnto S. Francis, hauing no farther power, and hauing ſo remayned a good ſpace, his companions endeauouring to aſſiſt him, by force and induſtry they ſo preuayled that the wheele tourned backe, ſo that the Preiſt was by the current of the water incontinently carryed into the depth of the chanell: and whiles he was there, there appeared vnto him a Frere Minor cloathed in white and girded with a corde, who very dextrouſly took him by the arme, and drew him out of the chanell, ſaying vnto him: I am that Francis whome thou haſt inuocated. The preiſt therefore finding himſelfe not only freed from danger, but perfectly well, conſidering the greatnes of the miracle, and the great mercy of God in his behalfe, by the merittes of S. Francis, exceedingly amazed, and proſtrating himſelfe to the earth to kiſſe the feet of his benefactour, but not ſeing him, he being already vaniſhed, he asked his companions whither he was gone, and how he might finde him: but they knowing no more then himſelfe, began to conceaue the miracle. Wherefore they all together fixing their eyes on the earth, did eleuate their ſpirit to God, magnifying his immenſiue greatnes, and the vertuous

*An other
fallen
vnder a
water
mill.*

Ggg

me-

merittes of the Sainct.

*An other
fallen
into a
well.*

Certaine yong men goeing from the towne Celan to gather grasse in a feild, where there was a well, which being ouergrowne with grasse was not seene, and each of them endeaouering to cutt his part, it chaunced that one of them fell into the well, where the water was fower pases deep. Falling he called for the helpe of S. Francis with a very strong faith and deuotion, and so lowd that all his companions heard him: and not seeing him, they came to the place where they heard the voice, and by the way which his hooke had made thy found the well, where seeing him therein, they ran to their houses, lamenting and crying for helpe, where they so moued their towne fellowes, that they came to asisist him, and one of them descending into the well, found him sitting on the water, without receauing any detriment, and drawing him out, he told them that falling, he had inuocated the help of S. Francis, who in his very fall asisisted him with his presence; for he very gently supported him with his sacred hand, neuer leauing him till they had drawne him out, then he exhorted them all together with him to giue thanckes to God, for that by the vertue of his faithfull seruant, he had deliuered him from death, and so they retourned to the towne giuing thanckes to God and to S. Francis.

*A womā
being
wounded
with a
grosse
stone.*

*A double
admirable
cure.*

When the Romane Court was resident att Alsifium, the Cardinall of Hostia, (who was after ward Pope Alexander the fourth) preaching in the church of S. Francis, there fell a grosse stone vpon the head of a deuout womā, wherwith she receaued such hurt that falling to the ground, each one thought her to be dead, and for such couered her with her owne coate not to trouble the sermon, with resolution to carry her out to performe her funerailles. But this woman as she testified afterward, when she receaued the blow, with great faith called for the helpe of sainct Francis; she was then before his altare, so the sermon being ended, she arose with the other women sound and perfectly well, without any signe of hurt: and which is admirable, hauing formerly had a great paine in her head that had long troubled her, in fauour of this last mortall blow, she neuer felt any paine after.

Neere to the city of Cornette, where there is a monasterie of Frere Minors, as they were melting a bell, many of the neighbour places repaired thither to see it: but there arose such a winde, that the whole world seemed ready to be dissolued, and taking the two doores it mounted them into the aire, and cast them againe on the ground with great impetuosity and violence, wherof one fell on a child called Bartholomew about eight yeares of age, which a woman, deuout vnto the Couent, had lent thither with an almo-

se. Now they all esteemed him not only dead, but vterly dis-
membred vnder such a waight; neuertheles inuocating the glorious
Father saint Francis, they ran all to lift vp the child from vnder
the dore; the Father of him being present, was so surpris'd with
greife, that he was euen senselesse, yet he inuocated the Saint
to whome he offered his sonne if he recouered: the dore att
length being lifted vp, the child arose on his legges sound and
well as if he had awakened from a sleep, which procured a great
ioy to the people and particularly to his Father. Now according to his
vow, the child being of competent age, which was about fourteen ye-
ares, he made him a Frere Minor, where he dyed piously, hauing so li-
ued a good Religious, of a notable spirit, worthy doctrine, and a fa-
mous Preacher.

*A child
on whom
had fal-
len the
dore of a
church.*

*Certaine other miracles like to these, of diuers that were deliuered
from the danger of death.*

THE VII. CHAPTER.

Certaine men of Castell-Lantin, hauing cutt out a verie
great stone, to place vnder the altare of a church of saint
Francis, that was shortlie after to be dedicated, albeit they
were forty men to raise and accommodate the same on the wagon
to carrie it to the said Church, yet were they not of sufficiencie to
performe the same. Now some of them attempting to trye their
forces and to doe more then they were able; the stone slipped
out of their hold and fell vpon one of them: which was a great
terroure and greife to the rest, as not knowing how to releiue their
companion. Wherefore they went away all, to ten persons, as not
able to endure that hideous spectacle: which ten inspired of God,
hauing inuocated saint Francis, praying him to haue compaision of
him that had so employed himselfe in his seruice, they attempted
to tourne the said stone, which they so easely handled that they per-
ceaued well they were assisted by the S. The stone being remoued the
man arose very sound, without any hurt, yea hauing one eye defectiue,
he was entierly cured therof, that it might publicquely appeare what
power the holy Father S. Francis had with God, euen in desperate
matters.

*A man
crushed
with a
very mas-
sie stone
by the
merites
of S. Fr.
no hurt:
besel him
therby.*

An other accident like vnto this, happened att saint Seuerin in
the Marquisat of Ancona, in this sort; A very great stone being
Ggg 2 brought

brought from Constantinople, and by the helpe of diuers men carryed into the Church of the said S. in laying it downe it so slipt that a man fell directly vnder it; but the stone att the very instant rayled it selfe: S. Francis appeared to the miserable labourer, whome he caused sound & safe to arise, albeit he was esteemed vtterly crushed in peeces.

Not an
other.

A Burgesse, of Gayette, called Bartholomew, earnestly employed in building the Church of S. Francis, there to be erected, a beame of timber being not well settled, fell vpon his neck, so that he was esteemed a dead man: as well therfore, as he could, he required the B. Sacrament of a Religious there present, who supposing it impoissible for him to liue till the same might be procured; vled vnto him these wordes of S. Augustin: *Crede & manducasti*, beleue and make account that thou hast eaten and receaued it; then he caused him to be carryed to his house. The night following, S. Francis with eleuen Religious appeared vnto him, holding before him a litle lābe, and drawing neere the bed, he called him saying: Bartholomew, feare not: for the deuill shall not be able to hinder thee from labouring in my seruice. Behold the lambe which thou diddest require to be giuen thee, whome thou hast receaued by thy good and pious desire, and by vertue wherof thou shalt recouer health of bodie and soule. Then hauing layd on him his sacred hand, and giuen him his holy benediction, he commanded him to goe finish the worck begun. He being vtterlie amazed arising in the morning entirely cured of so mortal a blow, returned with alacrity to his labour: which passed with incredible admiration to all those that had left him for dead, who awakened their soules, disposing them to loue and deuoutlie to reuerence the holy Father S. Francis.

Not an
other by
death.

In the towne of Ceperan, there was a man called Nicholas, who was so wounded by his enemies, that they left him for dead vpon the pavement. But whiles they stroke him he alwayes with a loud voice cryed out: S. Francis helpe me: which crye was heard a farre off by diuers who from the place where they were, could not so redely releiue him, but came to see him when the fact was done, and carryed him into his house, where he assured them, that albeit they saw him all barked in his blood, notwithstanding he should not dye of those woundes, wherof he neither felt any kinde of paine, and that this proceeded of the helpe he had receaued of the holy Father S. Francis: and also that he had obtayned of God, time for to doe penance. The successe confirmed the same: for being washed from his blood, he was withall cured of his woundes to the great astonishment of those that had seene and carryed him into his house.

In the towne of S. Geminian, a gentlemans sonne had a flux of blood issuing out of his eyes and mouth, which had brought him to
such

extremity that nothing was expected but his death, and had in deed diuers effects or tokens of death, as feeblenes of his spiritt, losse of his hearing, his members also were so weakened that he seemed insensible, and att euery moment was expected the yelding vp of his spiritt. Many therfore of his fathers freindes repairing as the manner is, to comfort him, they had no other discourse but of his buriall. But the father that had a great faith and confidence in God, though as a man he was exceedingly afflicted, enterrayned in his conceit a pious cogitation, which he put in execution, for leauing all those that were come to comfort him, he retired himselfe alone into the Church of S. Francis that was neere vnto his house, where falling prostrate on the ground, he putt his girdle about his necke, and prayed to S. Francis that he would please to be a meditative tour for the health of his sonne, in such sort and with so great a faith, so profound a humility, and such dolorous plaintes and teares, that he merited to be heard of IESVS CHRIST, then filled with hope, he returned to his house where he found his kinred and freindes full of ioy, for the health which his sonne had recouered, so that they and he together chaunged their teares into ioy and their affliction into contentment. So by the intercession of the said S. the death of the sonne was tournd into life. And afterward they altogether gaue thanckes to God, and his freindes and kinred departed exceedingly comforted and edified by the vertue of the holy father S. Francis.

A sick child abandoned of men was cured by the merites and intercessions of S. Franc.

Our Lord IESVS CHRIST wrought a like action, by the merites of this glorious S. in a towne called Tamarit in Catalonia; where he restored health to a yong gentlewoman; as also to an other of Ancona, who had a daughter ready to dye, through the extremity of her disease, whose father inuocating the S. obtayned his daughters health.

And another sick in like sort. Then another.

A Preist named Mattheiv of a citty called Ville-blâche, hauing drunk a deadly poyson incontinentlie lost his speech, his tongue and bodie swelled in such sort that death only was expected. An other Preist being present att this pittifull spectacle, perswaded him to be incontinentlie confessed: the other fell on his knees, but could not vtter so much as one word; wherefore making vse of reason, he humbly recommended himselfe vnto God in heart, beseeching him to vouchsafe by the merites of his seruant Francis, to free him from such an odious death. At the verie instant, which was admirable, he began with a loud voice to inuocate the name of S. Francis, then he vomited the venime which he had receaued, yelding thanckes to God and S. Francis.

other. A Priest also that was poisoned.

How S. Francis deliuered many pilgrimes from tempests and misfortunes of the sea.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

Certaine nauigatours were on a time in this sort in peril of death: they being some fise leagues distant from the harbour of Barut, the windes and tempestes growing violent, fearing to be drowned they cast ankor, but their disaster by the impetuositie of the windes so encreased, and the seas in such sort swelled that the cables breaking, the ankors did stick fast to the bottome, and the vessell floated heere and there, without hope of safety, by reason of the incertaintie of the course of the waters and the inequalitye of the tide, till it pleased God to calme the sea, when the mariners as halfe dead began to seeke their ankors in the sea where they perceaued the cables, there employing all the dilligence and art they could deuise. But their labour vainlie spent, they inuocated the assistance of diuers saintes. And being exceedingly wearied, one of them whose name was Perfectus, though of condicion verie lewd and imperfect, said in scoffing manner to his companions: You haue implored the assistance of so manie Saintes, yet haue they not heard you: lett vs a litle inuocate that new saint called Francis, and lett vs see if he will diue into the sea to finde our ankors, wherto all the rest accorded, not in derision as he moued it, but heartelie and with great faith, reprehending Perfectus for his sottish speech and derision: and so praying and making vowes, they instantlie saw their ankors miraculously to swimme vpon the waters, as if the nature of iron had bin chaunged into that of wood; so that by this meane they persisted deuoute and fully comforted.

*S. Franc.
by his
interces-
sion made
iron an-
kers to
swime
vpon the
sea.*

A poore pilgrime exceedingly wearied and afflicted, by meanes of a sharpe feuer that had a long time tormented him, came by shippe from beyond the sea; he had enterprised this iorney to see the body of the glorious Father Saint Francis, to whome he was exceedingly deuoted: and not being entierlie recouered of the said sickness, he was one day extremelie afflicted with thirst: but hauing no fresh water in the shippe where he was, he began to call with a loud voice and with a strong faith for drinke to be brought him, affirming that he well knew that Saint Francis had filled his barrell with pure water: and so in deed the barrell (which was knowne to be empty) was found full of sweet and cleare water. The day fol-
lowing

lowing there a rose a very cruell tempest, which so raised the waues
 that they couered all the said shippe, which was so beaten with the
 windes that the mariners expected the breaking of the mastes & tack-
 ling, and consequentlie the immediate sincking and drowning of the
 vessel and themselves by the furious impetuositie of the surges. But
 when the said pilgrime, that ceased not to pray for them all, began
 to cry a loft: Brethren arise and come to entertaine Sainct Francis
 who commeth to asist vs: behold him, he is come to saue vs. Then
 did they all kneele downe, and with teares and sighes beleech him to
 voutsafe to make intercession for their deliuary. The sea immediatlie
 became calme, the windes and cruell tempeste ceased, and they all gaue
 thanckes to the almighty, and rested obliged to the pilgrime, who att
 the instant was also cured of his feiuer, and together they perseuered deu-
 out to the holy Father S. Francis.

*S. Franc.
 miracu-
 lously set
 fresh wa-
 ter to
 one de-
 uoted
 vnto him
 and in
 his fa-
 uour
 ceased a
 violent
 tempeste.*

Brother James of Ariete pasing ouer a riuer in a boat with other of
 his Brethren, and comming to the shoare attempting to land out of
 the boate as his companions had done, the boat was vtterlie ouer-
 turned, so that both him selfe and the ferry-man tumbled in the wa-
 ter, the ferry-man saued him selfe by his dexterity of swimming: but
 the Religious sunck to the bottome. The other Religious extreme-
 lie afflicted att the mischance of their Brother, most instantlie prayed
 S. Francis that he would voutsafe to asist his deuout child, who on
 his owne part in the best sort he could in the water employed the
 helpe of his holy Father: who failed not in so vrgent a necessity to
 relieue this his beloued child: for he continually accompanied him in
 the depth of the water, till they ascended to the boat, where being ta-
 ken by the hand he mounted, and went afterward to his Brethren, who
 were much amazed, not only to see him safe and secure, but more to
 see his garmentes so dry, notwithstanding the long time he had bin in
 the bottome of the riuer, in so much that one drop of water could not
 be perceaued vpon him.

*S. Franc.
 prefer-
 ued a Fr.
 Minor
 from
 drown-
 ing
 yea from
 being
 wet,
 though
 he were
 in the
 bottom
 of a ri-
 uer.*

An other Religious called Bonaenture traauiling with two of his
 companions in a boat, which by the forcible current of the water
 being splitted on the one side, they by that meanes sunck to the botto-
 me of the riuer, but they from the lake of miseries inuocating the
 depth of mercie, and in this imminent perill imploring the as-
 sistance of their holy Father S. Francis, the barke att length was raised
 without one dropp of water, and being conducted by the power of
 God and the vertue of the glorious S. they all arriued safe and secure
 to the shoare.

*And al-
 so three
 Religious*

And an

A Religious of Ascoli being cast into a riuer, was deliuered of the
 danger by the merittes of the saint.

Certaine

And cer-
taine
men and
women.
And also
Mariners
of An-
cona

Certaine men and women being in manifest perill of drowning in the riuer of Riete, they inuocated the helpe of S. Francis, and were deliuered from the dangerous shipwrack of their vessell.

Certaine Mariners of Ancona, being in a vehement storme without hope of sauing themselves, and as it were assured of their death, they humbly inuocated the assistance of S. Francis, yea with such faith, that there incontinently appeared a great light about their shippe, wherby in an instant they found the sea very calme, as if the glorious S. by his admirable vertues, could att his pleasure commaund the seas and the windes. I should in deed esteeme it a matter impossible to vndertake in this behalfe perticularly to relate the admirable miracles which this holy Father hath caused to appeare so potent by sea as by land, where he hath assisted & releiued an infinite number of miserable dispayring persons. And in truth it is not to be admired, that now raining in heauen he commaund the sea, considering that whiles he liued in the world, he was obeyed of euery liuing creature, yea in admirable manner.

How diuers haue bin deliuered out of prison by the merittes and intercessions of the saint.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

A Grecian seruant of a gentleman in the Romane confines was falsly accused of theft: wherevpon his master caused him to be apprehended and cast into an obscure prison, with order to be bound and chained: but his mistresse knowing it, was exceeding sorrowfull, because she esteemed him sincere and faithfull, therefore often prayd her husband not to condemne him of disloyaulty but to sett him att liberty; but her prayers could take no hold in the obstinacie of her husband, and therefore she had recourse to the helpe of the glorious Father saint Francis, beseeching him to vndertake the patronage of the truth, to her prayers adding vowes. This aduocat of the afflicted went att the same time to visitt the prisoner, and hauing broaken the walles of the prison, and caused the manacles to fall from his handes, and the fetters from his feet, taking him by the hand led him out, saying: I am he to whome thy mistresse hath so affectionately recommended thee. And albeit this poore prisoner was in extreme feare, and wandered much to find his way being much amazed and labouring to cleare his passadge, by the vertue yet of his deliuer he found himselfe in the direct way, where he euidently knew the fauour he had receaued, wherupon taking courage he went incontinently to his mistresse, to whome he

S. Franc.
deliue-
reth a
prisoner
injustly
impriso-
ned.

he recounted the miracle, which encreased her feruour and loue towards our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and her deuotion towards S. Francis.

In the city of Massa, a poore man was to pay a quantity of siluer to a knight; but he was so poore that his goodes being insufficient to discharge the debt, he was att the sute of the knight imprisoned, the wretch therfore finding himselfe fast in prison, prayed the said knight to haue compasfion of him, and graunt him some time for the loue of S. Francis: but this proud and merciles man contemning the cryes of this poore man, together with the loue of S. Francis, as if the loue of the saintes were a triuolous matter and of small consequence, answered him arrogantly, that he would putt him in such a place as neither S. Francis nor any other should deliuer him, till he had discharged his debt: and so caused him to be shutt vp in an obscure prison, with fetters and manacles, thereby supposing, conformably to his peruerse will and not vnto reason, to torment him the more: but a litle after that he had practised this impietie, the glorious saint Francis went to the prison, brake the dores, lockes, and iron chaines, manacles and fetters, and so freed the poore fellow, and sent him directly to his house hauing by this admirable miracle trodden vnder foote the pride of the world. The cruelty of this knight was thenceforward chaunged into great mildnes.

Albertus of Aresso being also detained in prison, but iniustly: because the debtes pretended against him was not due, he recommended his innocencie to the holie Father S. Francis, to whome as also to his Religious, he was exceedingly deuoted, which he who had caused him to be imprisoned vnderstanding, with a loud voice blasphemously answered: neither S. Francis, nor God himselfe shall deliuer thee out of my handes till I be satisfied. On S. Francis eue, the prisoner hauing not yet eaten, because for reuerence vnto him he had giuen his meate to a poore creature, the said S. appeared vnto him in the night, and as he entered into the prison all the dores did open, and att the same instant the fetters and manacles fell from the handes and feet of the prisoner, who went forth and with great astonishment hastened vnto his house: from thenceforward with greater deuotion he fasted the eue of the feast of his deliuerer, and wheras he accustomed yearly to presente a wax light vnto his church, he thenceforward in memory of this benefitt augmented the quantity therof.

*A gentle-
man mis-
prising
S. Franc.
had trial
of his
power.*

*And an
other
likewise.*

Hh h

of

Of other miracles like vnto the forsaide.

THE X. CHAPTER.

*S. Franc.
freed a
prisoner
without
seeking
him att
liberty.*

IN the time of Pope Gregory the ninth, there was a Cittizen of A-
lisia called Peter, who being accused of heresie, was apprehended
att Rome, and by order from the Pope committed to the custo-
dy of the Bishop of Tiouly, assuring him that if he permitted him to es-
cape he should be deprived of his bishopprick. He then hauing receaued
chardge of him, had him no sooner in protection, but he chained him
with fetters and manacles: and cast him into a strong and strict pri-
son, and gaue him bread by waight, and water by measure. The
miserable wretch therefore finding himselfe reduced to that ruefull
and pittifull estate, hartelie recommended himselfe vnto God and con-
tinually powred out teares; he implored the assistance of S. Francis,
praying him to haue compasison on him, calling withall to memorie
that his feast approached: and because the light of faith had expelled
all peruersity and error of heresie, affectionatlie recommending him-
selfe to the faithfull seruant of IESVS CHRIST, he merited to
be heard of his diuine maiestie. For in the verie night of the holy In-
tercessours feast, about the beake of day, the mercifull Father discen-
ded in to the prison and called him by his name, willing him incontin-
entlie to arise. He not hauing heard the dores of the prison to open,
nor any other noile, and hearing himselfe called, full of trembling de-
maunded who called him. Hauing vnderstood that it was S. Francis,
and perceauing his manacles and fetters to be fallen of from his handes
and feet: and seeing the dores of themselves to open, he was stricken
into such an amazement, that albeit he found his person freely att li-
berty and had commodity to goe forth, yet had he not power to stirre
from his place. Being in this perplexity, he called out, and the keepers
came running, who seeing the man thus vnchained, knowing well in
what manner he was fettered; perceauing also the dores of themselves
to be opened, that were so surely fastened, and the lockes with other
iron implementes lying on the ground, they aduertised the bishop
therof, who going incontinentlie to the prison, and hauing seene and
considered all circumstances, knew manifestly that it was a worck of
God. Wherat falling on his knees he adored God; and causing the
chaines, manacles and other irons, as lockes, barres and nailes that we-
re miraculously loosed, to be gathered together, he sent all to the
Pope and Cardinals, to whome he related the miraculous historie not
with-

without admiration to his Holines, who was willing to giue absolute freedome to this wretch, for his Intercessors sake.

A gentleman called Guidolot, of S. Gimintan, was falsely accused to haue poisoned a knight, and to haue resolved also to poison his sonne withall his family, in which respect he was by the gouernour of the place committed prisoner to a very strong tour, where his handes and feet were loaden with irons, but knowing his owne innocencie he put his hope in God, recommended his cause to the holy Father S. Francis, and inuocated him to be his Aduocat and Protectour. But the gouernour considering the enormity of the fact wherof he was accused, deuised by what tortures he could to wrest out the truth of this accusation & by what tormēt to putt him to death when he should haue acknowledged the crime: and hauing determined to begin the next morning by torture to examine him: the gentleman the same night was visited by Sainēt Francis, who was enuironed with a resplendant light which still continued till the break of day, and this diuine light being gone, the prisoner was exceeding ioyfull, with hope shortly to be deliuered without any detriment. Now soone after the Sergeants came to conduct him to the place of examination, where without other proceeding he was fastened to the torturing cord, then being lifted vp very high, the Iudge examined him vpon the crime: but hauing confessed nothing, the Iudge appointed a great weight of iron to be fastened vnto him, wherwith he was often times hoisted aloft, and violentlie lett downe againe, to make him confesse. But he as innocent and interiourlie comforted by the diuine maiestie, in fauour of his innocencie, appeared before the face of the iudge full of ioy, as one that felt not any paine by the tormentes. The Iudge perceauing that he contemned his tortures, became furious and commanded a great fire to be kindled vnder him, that by the extremitie of the hote fire, he might be constrained to confesse the fact, which proved vaine, for neither the fire, nor smoake, did in any sort offend him. The iudge therefore, for his last crueltie caused a vessell full of boiling oyle to be cast in his face, which by the vertue and merit of his Aduocat to whome he had recommended his cause, procured him no more offence then had done the former extremities. At length the Iudge and executioners, wearied with tormenting this gentleman, he was by sentence declared innocent and freed, and remitted to his former freedome and liberty,

*S. Franc.
was protectour
of the innocencie
of a gentleman
deuout
vnto him.*

Of the certaine women, that being with child and in danger of death;
att their deliuey were releined by the saint.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

*A lady
very hap-
pely de-
liuered
in a dā-
gerous
trauaile
of child.*

A Great Countesse of Slauonia, who was no lesse famous for her vertue and worthines, then noble in bloud and discent, was exceeding deuout vnto S. Francis, and very charitable, vnto his Religious. She being in trauaile of child, was so tormented with throwes, that the birth of the child was attended to be her death; all humane helpe was despaired of, without destroying the fruit. Now amidst the anguishes, she called to minde the great vertues and merites of S. Francis and of his eminencie, therefore hauing att other times bin piously affected vnto him, she with a very strong confidence, had recourse vnto him, as to the assured refuge of the desolate, saying: O glorious S. all my afflicted members, beseech thy pittie to asist them, and I promise thee by hart, that which I cannot expresse by wordes. Behold an admirable accident! she had no foeuer vttered these wordes, but her pangues did cease as did the terme of her trauaile, for she brought into the world a faire and healthfull boy, neither did she faile of her vowes; for she caused to be builded a faire and lardge church, in honour of her deliuerer, which being finished, she gaue it to his Religious, spending the rest of her dayes exemplarly, more affected then euer to the glorious father saint Francis, her Aduocate and Protector.

*A woman
was de-
liuered of
a dead
child by
touching
a girdle
of S. Fr.*

About the plaines of Rome, a woman called Beatrix, whose time of greatnes being complete, and hauing already four whole dayes carryed her fruit dead in her wombe, oppressed with most violent tormentes, she expected only death, the creature which she carryed liuelesse in her, reducing her to this extremity: the Phisicians failed not to administer vnto her all conuenient remedies that they could deuise; but all humane helpe was vaine, so that the malediction which God gaue to Eue in the earthlie Paradise, might be said to be in a supreme manner fallen vpon her, considering that her verie wombe wherein she had already buried her sonne, was the beginning of her sepulture. Now for her last releife, she sent to the Church of saint Francis to demaund some relique, where finding no other thing then a peice of the cord wherwith he was girded, two Religious of his Order brought it vnto her and layd it reuerently vpon her. It admirably succeeded, that as soone as this dolefull woman had touched the peice

peice of cord, she was deliuered of her dead child, which doubtlesly had caused her death, so that her anguishes did cease, and she remaind sound and deliuered from the imminent perill of death.

Of other like miracles, in assisting litle children.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

All the children that a gentlewoman of Carnio called Iulian, brought into the world, did dye before she could haue comfort of them, which caused her an extreame affliction, incessantly complayning of her disastre that till then she had brought forth her children only to be buried; now it chaunced that being four monethes gone with child, reflecting more, by reason of her disgraces past, vpon the death, then the birth of the child conceaued in her wombe, she prayed saint Francis for the conseruation of the life of that which was not yet borne. Vpon a night therefore, there appeared vnto her in vision a woman hauing in her armes a right beautifull child, which she offered her, but she refused it, as fearing it would incontinently perish in her handes. Norwithstanding the said woman encouraged her saying: receaue it confidently, for it is sent thee by the glorious Father of S. Francis, the true comforter of the afflicted, and be assured it shall not dye as the rest haue done, but shall liue, and thou shalt find great contentment in his vertuous disposition. Awaking, she remembered this celestially vision, which thenceforward procured her exceeding ioy to the time of her deliuey, which was of a stronge and complete sonne; who as he came into the world by the intercession of S. Francis so did also the vertues and merittes of the S. encrease in him, that being great he induced his parentes to liue spiritually: he faithfully serued IESVS CHRIST, and honoured his glorious SS. with great zeale, and particularly the holy Father S. Francis.

A woman that could not bring vp her children, did nourish one by the intercession of S. Francis, that procured very vertuous.

And another also.

A woman that could haue no sonnes had by the merites of S. Francis.

The like miracle was wrought in the city of Tiouly. A woman hauing diuers daughters, much desired to haue a sonne; to which effect she often offered her prayers with a strong faith vnto saint Francis that he would be her Intercessor, who att length conceauing and the time of deliuey attended, her fauour was doubled, for att one birth she brought into the world two sonnes, wherof being over-joyed, she yielded infinite thanckes to God the Creatour and to his deuout seruant S. Francis.

Neere the city of Viterbo, a woman being neere her deliuey, was subiecte to soundinges, such as she was often supposed to be dead a birth.

H h h 3

being

Punish-
ment of
a woman
ingrate-
full to S.
Francis.

being withall oppressed with such panges and throwes as women in that case doe ordinarilie endure; her nature and strenght alreadie failing her, and as it were desperate of all humane helpe, she deuoutlie inuocated saint Francis, and with such faith recommended her selfe to his merittes, that she was miraculously freed of those tormentes, and was deliuered of a fayre and well proportioned child: But whereas shortlie after, shee seemed to haue forgotten this great benefitt receaued, not yelding due honour vnto the saint, because one the day of his feast, in steed of honouring and sanctifying it, she employed her selfe in certaine base and vnseemlie exercises, God permitted, for this ingratitute, her right arme instantlie to wither: the iust diuine wroth rested not there, but she attempting to lift vp her cripled arme with the other, that also withered withall. This woman thus miserablie afflicted, became repentant and acknowledged her crime committed, and with such a faith promised almightie God to amend her selfe, that by her true contrition and penitence, she merited to haue the vse of her armes thus lost, by almightie God, restored vnto her, through the merittes of saint Francis; wherein appeareth how God punisheth ingratitude, and admitteth into fauour the truelie penitent.

A woman
was as-
sisted by S.
Francis
and de-
liuered of
a most
dange-
rous child
birth.

An other woman of the countrie of Arrezzo in Tuscanie, hauing for seauen dayes together endured intollerable anguishes of childbirth, being become euen all blacke and deformed in her countenance, by meanes of the extremitie of her greife her cure being desperate, she, more by heart then voice, vowed her selfe to saint Francis, and with such a firme confidence implored his aide, that falling into a slumber, she saw in vision her Intercessour, who sweetlie saluted her, demanding of her if she knew him: and she answered, she did: Then he bid her say the *Salue Regina*, affirming that before she had ended the same, she should be securelie deliuered. This woman vpon this discourse awaking, with great hope began the *Salue*; and hauing said, *Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos conuerte*, she was instantly deliuered of a sonne, for which she gaue thanckes to the Queene of heauen, the mother of mercies, who, by the merittes of saint Francis had vouchsafed to haue compalsion of this miserable woman, and to comfort her.

of

Of the blind that by the vertue of this S. receaued sight.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

THere was a Religious in the Couent of the Freer Minros at Naples, called Robert, that for diuers yeares had bin blind, yea there were fleshy lumpes growne with in his eyes that hindered the motion and vse of the eyeliddes; Diuers Religious being from seuerall partes of the world assembled vnto this Couent, the holy Father S. Francis vouchsafed in their presence to cure him that was blinde, therby to encourage the said Religious that were to attempt a long iourney; so that the said Religious supposing one night to dye, and hauing had the recommendation of his soule, the holy Father saint Antony of Padua, Brother Augustin, and Brother Iames of Afsisium, and taking a knife, he cutt off all the superfluous flesh that was on his eyes: in such sort that in one instant he both restored his cleare sight; and deliuered him from present death: and then said vnto him: Robert this fauour which I haue done thee, is a pledge and testimony vnto all the Religious that are to depart hence to trauell into diuers countreyes, that I wilbe continuallie in their presence, and will direct their steppes, that they may fulfill their obediences with a greater consolation, ioyfull hart, and as enamoured of our Lord IESVS CHRIST.

*S. Franc.
cured a
Religious
of a mor-
tall in-
firmity
of his
eyes.*

Neere vnto Thebes in the Romane contrie, a blind woman, hauing fasted with bread and water on the vigill of saint Francis, the morning of the feast, her husband verie timelie conducted her to the Couent of the Frere Minors, there to heare Masse, and satt the eleuation of the Blessed Sacrament her eyes were opened, and she manifestly saw and adored it with the greatest deuotion she could with a loud voice crying out: I yeld thee infinite thanks my lord, and to thee o glorious saint Francis, who haue permitted me to see the most sacred body of my Redeemer IESVS CHRIST. Which the people there assembled, seeing and hearing, they all prayed and thancked God for the same. The masse being ended, the people, in regard of this miracle, could not be satisfied with beholding this woman; for they all knew she had bin blind. Retourning to her house she gaue infinite thanckes to God, and to S. Francis, spending the rest of her time very religiously.

*A blinde
woman
receaued
sight on
the feast
of S. Fr.*

In the plaines of Rome there was in the citty of Posta a child of fourteene yeares old, so afflicted in one of his eyes, that it slipt out of the

the

the place, and for eight dayes together he was contrayned to hold in his hand the aple that hung by the sinowes of the same eye, which being as withered hung out the length of a finger: The Phisicians were ignorant what to doe, for to cut it off, was very dangerous, and therefore they held it as a desperat cure: but the Father who fainted with greife, hauing tourned his hart towards God and the glorious Father S. Francis, with a right confident faith required his helpe, wherein he was not deceaued, but graciously heard: for without other meane the eye of the child returned into his first estate, and of dried and withered as it was, became faire and cleerer then before, enoying a pure sight, to the exceeding ioy, edification and consolation, of all those that vnderstood therof.

Of other blind, restored to sight by the vertue and merites of the S.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

And another.

IN the plaines of Rome, in a towne called Magno, vpon the eue of S. Francis, a piece of timber falling from on high, stroake a Preist on the nape of the necke: the violence of which blow stroake the right eye out of his head, and by the force therof he also fell vnto the ground. But imploring the aid of S. Francis by these wordes: Holy Father helpe me, that I may be able to goe to thy feast, as I haue promised thy Religious, he incontinentlie arose sound, and cured, his eye being returned into his proper place, with as great contentment to thole present, as they had conceaued horriour att the accident. Therefore the more reuerentlie to shew themselues thanckfull vnto God, they went in companie into his church, to celebrate his feast with this priest, who made publicly relation of the great compasion and vertue of this S. which in himselfe he had experienced.

Then another.

A man of Mount-Gargan, labouring in a vineyard, thincking to cutt a branch of a tree, cut one of his eyes in two pieces, one of which falling out of his place, hung downe to the depth of his iawes: wherefore despayring of all humane helpe, he had instantlie recourse vnto S. Francis, vowing to fast the eue of his feast, if he assisted him in this extremitie, which he vttered so heartily and with so strong a faith, that his prayers ended, the two pieces of his eye reioyned againe, and his sight was as perfect as before, for which he gaue thanckes with great deuotion.

S. Francis gaue sight to one borne blind.

A gentlemans sonne that was borne blinde, by the intercession of the glorious Father S. Francis receaued his sight: for which great miracle, he attayning to conuenient age was called Illuminatus, who to shew him-

himselfe gratefull as was requisite, and to attaine greater perfection, became a Frere Minor, where he so profited in the light of the grace of God, that he seemed to be the tonne of the true light, that illuminateth euery man of this world, and conformable to his life also dyed very piouslie.

A gentleman criled Girard of Zacanto, neere vnto Anania, albeit he were sinnefull, yet did he not omitt charitably to entertaine the Frere Minors: This man on a time lodged two that were of a Couent neere vnto him, who being to retourne to S. Francis appeared to one of them, & said: Goe to that gentleman who, in your receaueth God & me, and tel him from me, that he is become blind, by reason of the finnes which he knoweth himselfe to be guilty of, and whereof he would neuer be confessed: which said he vanished. The Religious went to him, & made full relation therof vnto him, who reflecting on himselfe, acknowledged that what the S. had reuealed of him was very true, wherupon being moued vnto perfect contrition, he made a generall confelsion, with abundant effusion of teares: and as soone as he had confessed all his finnes, he recouered his sight. The bruit of this great miracle was generally spred, which stirred vp many, not only to deuotion towards this holie Father, but euen to an entire confelsion of their finnes, and to an enter-tainment of the poore of IESVS CHRIST.

*And as
other
for his
spiritual
profit.*

*Of many diseased that were cured by the merittes of the glorious Father
Sanc^t Francis.*

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THere was in the village of Preue a poore boy both deafe and dumbe, from his birth, whose tongue was so short & litle that it seemed to such as sought it, to be cutt off. A gentleman called Marck, for the loue of God entertayned this poore boy, of whom he conceaued a great compasfion in regard that he found him to be of a good disposition. He often said vnto his wife, that if the holy Father S. Francis would vouchsafe by his intercession to cure him, he would promise for the loue of God to entertayne him all the time of his life. The glorious S. lente not a deafe eare to this pious intention, for the oblation being made, the boy began sodenlie to haue his tongue att libertie and to speake, saying glory be vnto God, and to the glorious Father S. Francis, who hath now giuen me my speech and hearing: for which the gentleman and his wife no lesse amazed then ioyfull, gaue infinite thanckes to God, performed the said promise, and liued very spirituallly; being alwayes mindfull of this miracle, and had a speciall

*God re-
stored
speech &
hearing
to one by
the in-
tercessiō
of S. Fr.*

care of the said child, for the loue of God, and of his faithfull seruant S. Francis.

*And cured mor-
tal woundes.*

Brother Iames of Iseo in his infancie, and whiles he was vnder his fathers protection, had a cruell wound in his stomake, but being inspired of God, with a very seruent deuotion he entred into the Order of this Sainct, notwithstanding his tender yeares, and the said infirmitie which he neuer discovered, till being present att the translation of the glorious Sainct and approaching neere the sepulchre wherein his holie reliques were to be placed, he with a seruent deuotion embraced the sepulchre whence that pretious treasure was taken, and was instantlie cured of his wound, which otherwise was incurable, euerie thing disposing it selfe conueniently, the very band falling of wherewith it was bound; and in that sort were manie persons cured of the like infirmities by the merittes of this glorious Sainct, as Brother Bartholomew of Agubio, Brother Angelus of Todj, Syr Nicolas of Stichiam, Iohn de la Foye, a Pisan gentleman, one of the cittie of Ciperne, Peter Sicilian, a man of Spelle, neere vnto Alsifium, and many others cured of like diseases, as also especially Brother Angelus of Tudette, and a Priest of Sucane called Sir Nicolas, and an other also called Iohn de Fore, and a man of the cittie of Pise, an other of the cittie of Cisterne, and one of Espelle, one called Peter of Sicily, and infinite others, that were, by the mercie of God, and the merittes of blessed S. Francis, miraculously deliuered.

*He restored sight
and hearing, and
cured a woman
extremely
tormented and
afflicted.*

A woman of Maremm had bin about fve yeares troubled in her spirit, deprived of her sight and hearing: yea was come to that point, that she rent her garmentes with her teeth, and as enraged, feared neither fire, nor water, nor other danger, and as besides fallen into that horrible disease of the falling sicknes. This miserable wretch it pleased the diuine Maiesty to fauour, and first to illuminate her interiourlie, for Sainct Francis one night appeared vnto her, sitting verie eminentlie eleuated in a Royall seate, before whome falling one her knees, she humbly prayed him to cure her. But the Sainct deferring to graunt her request, she redoubled her petition, therevnto adding a vow, and promised him that in the honour of God and him, she would neuer whiles she liued, deny an almofe to any poore person, that should demand it of her, so far forth as her ability would stretch, which Sainct Francis accepting, he made on her the signe of the crosse, and she was cured both of body and soule. Many others oppressed with like infirmities, haue bin cured by this compasionate Sainct and particularly a yong mayden of Norcia, and the sonne of a gentleman of the said cit-

ty,

ry, who were deliuered by almighty God, through the merittes and intercession of this his humble seruant.

Of other like miracles.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

Peter of Fullignium, goeing as a Pilgrim, but with little deuotion to visit the church of S. Michael the Archangell, and drinking water att a fountaine, the deuill entred into his bodie, and so tormented him that he was as it were vtterlie grinded, broken, crushed, and all black; he alwayes vttered abhominable matters, and vied certaine gestures that were dreadfull and fearfull to all the beholders. And being on day lesse tormented then of ordinarie, he remembered to haue heard the meruailous workes of saint Francis to be exceedingly recommended, and particularly that he deliuered such as were possessed: He went vnto his Church, where with a profounde humilitie and deuotion, he approached vnto his holie sepulchre, which hauing touched, he was miraculously deliuered of this oppression, for which he shewed himselfe thankfull vnto God and S. Francis.

One possessed was deliuered by the meritts of S. Francis.

A gentlewoman of the citty of Narnie, afflicted by the deuill, was by the compulsion of the saint deliuered, together with diuers others that were tormented by the deuill, which would be to long to committ to history.

And also an other.

A gentleman of Fano called Bon, being afflicted with the palsy and leprosie, caused himselfe to be conducted to the Church of Saint Francis where he prayed him for his health, with such instance and faith that by the merittes of the saint he was heard of almighty God.

And another.

A yongman called Accio of Saint Seuerin being a leaper, made a vow to the S. caused himselfe to be carryed vnto his shrine, and was incontinentlie by his merittes deliuered. This glorious saint had many excellent vertues touching the dresing and curing of this disease: for he had deputed himselfe vnto their seruice, for the loue he had to piety and Christian humilitie.

And a woman of a mortal bloody flux.

A gentlewoman of the citty of Sora, called Rogata, for foure and twentie yeares, endured, with extreme affliction the bloody flux, and this infirmittie was occasion of other diseases besides: she hauing bin long time tormented by the Physicians, and finding no ease, but a continuation of her greite, and diuersitie of cruell diseases, it reduced her euen to death: for when her flux was stayed, her

leg-

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her legges, and all her body did swell, and whiles her flux continued, it did so afflict her that she could not stand on her feet, so that this poore woman knew not what to doe other then to expect in short time the end of her life; being in this perplexity, she one day heard a yong man recout the merueilles so admirable which God had wrought, and did worck by the merittes of the glorious Earther saint Francis, which so moued her, that with abundant effusion of teares, replenished with faith and hope, she began to say to her selfe: O glorious Saint that art famous by so many miracles, if it would please thee to haue compasison of me, and to free me of mine insupportable miseryes, thou knowest how much the great glory of thy clemencie would therby be augmented; for it seemeth thou neuer diddest worck so great a miracle: which hauing vttered, she had an instant feeling of the diuine operation in her; for by the merittes of the Saint she was cured. And together with her, a child of hers called Marck, maymed in one arme, who hauing vowed to the Saint, was presently cured.

*One also
maymed
of one
arme.*

*And another of
the flux.*

*He cured
S. Praxede of a
dangerous fall.*

A Sicilian woman, hauing bin afflicted with the bloody flux, was by the merittes of this stander-bearer of I E S V S, cured therof. Praxede a Roman gentlewoman, famous for her sanctity, in regard that she had liued exemplary from her tender age, att which time for the loue of her Spoule I E S V S C H R I S T she shutt her selfe for 40. yeares into a litle chamber: she I say, was fauoured of saint Francis; for goeing one day vpon occasion to the topp of her house, being surprised with an amazement of her head, she fell downe and brake her foot and legge, and disioynted hir shoulder: but the holy Father saint Francis incontinently appeared vnto her, enuironned with splendour and glory, and said: Arise my daughter and feare not: then taking her by the hand, he lifted her vp right on her feet, and presently the vision disappeared. This gentlewoman thus amazed, went about the house, considering with her selfe whither she were cured, or that she dreamed; and the greatnes of this miracle was such, that albeit she felt the truth therof, she neuertheles called for a light, wherby she assured her selfe that the diuine vertue by meane of saint Francis, had wrought this miracle in her, which she related to her lay sister, and afterwarde to diuers that did visit her.

of

of the merueillous chasticementes which God hath layd on those that haue not kept and honoured the feast of this glorious S.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

IN Poictou, in a village called Sime, there was a Preist named Sir Renald, very deuout vnto S. Francis, and therfore, aduertised his Parishioners of his feast, exhorting them to keep the same as of precept: but one of them hauing litle respect therof, went that day to cutt wood, and as he prepared himselfe thervnto, he heard a voice that spake vnto him three seuerall times: Doe not worcke, for it is a festiuall day; but the indeuout fellow would no more obey the voice of God, then he had done the aduertisement of his Curat; and therfore the diuine power, for the glorie of the Sainct proceeded with correction: for this man lifting vp one hande to cutt a forcke of wood which he held with the other, his left hand remayned fastened to the wood, and the other to the iron, without power to moue his fingers: wherwith the wretch was so confounded, that not knowing what to doe, he resolued to goe in that manner to the Church where the people were yet assembled, who beholding him in that estate, were extremely amazed att so strange and vnwonted a punishment. But the miserable fellow repenting his fault, and being admonished by the Preist, he humbly fell on his knees before the altar, and hartely recomended himselfe to the S. and according as he had bin thrice admonished by the diuine voice, he made three vowes: the first was thenceforward to keep the feast; the second, that during all his life he would be euer present on that day in the same church, to prayse and honour God and S. Francis; the third that he would goe personally to visite his holy body att Afsisium. It was doubtlesse a matter worthy and admirable for all the people assembled in that Church, to behold; that hauing made the said first vow, one of his fingers was loosed from the iron instrument wherto his hand was ioyned; hauing made the second vow an other finger was loosed; and after the third, not only the third finger, but both his handes formerly fastened, were absolutely set att liberty. The people hauing seene the greatnes of this miracle deuoutly gaue thanckes vnto God together with the man deliuered, admiring the notable and singuler vertue of the S. that could so miraculously strike and cure in one moment. The iron and wood wherto his handes were fastened, doe to this present hang att an altare in the said church, which was erected in honour of S. Francis and in memory of this miracle: many other miracles wrought in the said place, and

A man refusing to keepe the feast of S. Fr. had his handes fastened to his hatchett.

that circuit demonstrate how great the vertue and power of this glorious saint is in heauen, and how much he is to be honoured and reuerenced on earth.

In the city of Mans, a woman refusing to keep the feast of S. Francis, tooke her distaffe and spindle to spin: but endeavouring to begin, her fingers became so stiffe, and procured her such torment, that made her in manner furious; but acknowledging her fault and the vertue and merittes of the Saint, she hastened instantly to the church, where she prayed the Religious to recommend her to God and the Saint. So the deuout Religious offering their deuotions for this woman, were heard: for she was att the very instant cured of that extreme and insupportable torment. There remayned only a signe as it were of a burning, in memorie of this miracle. Manie other like accidentes haue occured, as in the plaines of Rome, an other woman for refusing to keep the feast of the Saint. And in Spaine a man of Valladolid, together with an other woman in the cittie of Pilles: in which places the woman making no esteeme of the feast of the Saint, were rigourously punished: but hauing acknowledged their fautes and done penance for them, they were with more admiration deliuered.

A knight of Borgo in the contrie of Massa, without feare or respect contemned the wonderfull miracles of S. Francis, offering many abuses to the pilgrimes that went to visitt the Church where his body reposed, he euen impudently rayled against the Religious. It happened one day that blaspheming the glorie of this holie Father, he said: if it be true that Brother Francis be a Saint, he will that my sword be my death, and if he be not so, I shall remaine without danger: O admirable effect of the iust iudgement of God; some few dayes after this wretch hauing certaine speeches with a nephew of his owne, they grew from wordes to blowes, and the Nephew wresting his sword out of his handes thrust him through the body, with which thrust he instantly dyed; God permitting his punishment to be conformable to his horrible blasphemie, for an example to the temerarious that with ouer presumptuous wordes, blaspheme the admirable workes of SS. who meritt to be honoured and reuerenced.

Another. A Iudge called Alexander, did not only condemne saint Francis and his singuler vertues: but did euen with all possibilty endeavour to withdraw his holy reputation from the opinion of men: in respect wherof by diuine permission he instantly became mute, and so remayned for six years: att the end wherof acknowledging that he had bin punished in that member wherby he had offended, he was so penitent for his crime, that he appeased the indignation of God and of the

And a woman attempting on that day to spin had an extreme paine in her fingers.

The punishment of a blasphemie against S. Franc.

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the mercifull Sainct in fuch fort that his fpeech retourned, for which he was thanckfull to God and to the Sainct his interceffour : he failed not thenceforward to confecrate that tongue of his, which he had abuſed in blaſphemy, to the praife and benediction of God and the glorious Father S. Francis, to whome the ſaid puniſhment had made him exceeding deuout.

Of ſome other miracles wrought by this glorious S.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

IN the Borough Gallian of the dioceſe of Cales, there was a woman called Marie, who with great deuotion ſpent her time in the ſeruice of God, and was merueillouſlie deuoted vnto ſainct Francis ; the one day conſtrayned by neceſſitie, went forth of her houſe, in a verie hote ſeaſon, ſeeking her liuing by labour ; and being vpon a litle hill ſhe was exceeding wearie, as well through her ordinarie abſtinēces, as by the preſent extremitie of the heat, and therewith all being verie thirſtie, ſhe ſate downe on the ground in that anxietie void of all comfort ; and being there reduced nere vnto death, ſhe with a deuout ſpirit called on her Aduocate, and humbly perſeuering in her prayer, with wearines the fell a ſleep. Now God who alwayes aſſiſteth them that truelie putt their confidence in him ſent the glorious Sainct to her that was deuout vnto him, who incontinently awaking her, called her by name, ſaying : Mary, ariſe, and drinck of the water that by diuine grace is graunted to thee and to many. This woman hearing the voice, with an incredible force aroſe on her feet, and hauing taken a ſtone out of the ground which the S. in her dreame had ſhewed her, and a litle ſtirred the earth with a ſtaffe, there ſprung out a water moſt cleare and of a very delightfull taſt, which afterward by the will of God grew to a great fountaine. Thus did this woman quench her thirſt, recomfort her forces, and waſhing her eyes which had bin long time bleared and dimme, they were thenceforward moſt pure and cleare, wherwith exceedingly cōforted ſhe retourned to her houſe, manifeſting to each one this great miracle to the glory of God and to the ſaid Sainct, ſo that this miraculous fountaine being diſulged, the people flocked thither from far off, the water thereof was proued to be of greater force and vertue then other waters, in ſuch fort that ſuch as repayed thither with deuotion to ſee this miracle, confeſſed and contrite, drincking of the water, were cured of their infirmities : This fountaine is yet extant in the ſaid place, where is build-

*One deuout vnto S. Fr. miracu-
louſly ob-
tained
water in
her ne-
ceſſity.*

A chery tree of one deuout to the said S. being dead and withered bare fruit.

Of vignes & corne that wer preserved fro certayne wormes that destroyed them.

The ox of one deuout vnto him was cured of a broken legge.

He recovered a lost horse for one deuout vnto him: & reioyned a dish broken in pieces.

builted a faire Church, where ordinarily the diuine office is celebrated.

In the citty of S. Facondus in Spaine, a chery tree of one deuout vnto S. Francis being withered, the S. against the ordinary courte of nature made it wax greene, beare leaues, flowers, & fruit as befo-e. He wrought the like miracle for the inhabitantes of a village neere vnto Vilely, freing their vines from the wormes called mid-eaters, that did destroy and wither them, without any meane to preuent them. Neere vnto Valence there were litle wormes that deuoured the corne in the garners, & particulierlie of a preist very deuout vnto the S. who not able by his industry to preuent such a damage, he affectionatlie and with a strong faith recommended the matter to the S. and obtained that the said wormes vanished and were neuer seene after. All the iurisdiction of the lord of Malle-pierre in Apulia, was by the holy Father S. Francis deliuered from the vexation and importunity of the locustes that destroyed the whole country, consuming the grasse, corne and fruit, the said gentleman hauing with a true humility implored the helpe of the said sainct.

One called Martin had two oxen, one of which where he was feeding brake a legge, so that without any hope that it could be recouered, he went full of despaire vnto his houle, carrying with him wherewith rather to flea him the to imagine of any cure: but departing from the field, and fearing that the wolues might deuoure him whiles he went home, he inuocated the glorious Father S. Francis saying: holy Father, I commend myne ox vnto thy care this night: which he vttered with such a faith, that arising very early the next morning, carrying with him something to dresse the ox, and hauing with him a freinde of his, if he chaunced to finde him dead, to helpe to flea him, they found the ox when they came to the field as sound, as if he had receaued no hurt, for which they yelded infinite thanckes to their Pastour who had not only preserved him from the wolues, but had also healed him of an incurable rupture. They conducted him to the house, publicly relating this miracle. This humble and glorious holy Father in all necessities assisted them that with a feruent faith inuocated him, not disdayning euen in base and meane accidents to comfort the. Which I speake, becaule being demaunded in small matters and so litle consequence; he failed not to assift those who were deuout vnto him to their great contentment and satisfaction; As he did a gentleman of Amiterne, whose horse he recouered, it being lost. And a woman, out of whose handes a dish had fallé and was broken in many pieces which he reioyned together. And an other of Mountolme in the Marquisate of Ancona, for whome he reioyned a plough share, that was broken in working.

of

Of other miracles of great piety.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

IN the bishopricke of Sabee, there was a woman about 80. yeares of age, whose daughter dying, left behind her a sucking child: this old woman not knowing how to bring vp the child, not yet being of ability to procure it a nurse, she was exceedingly grieved to see to this little one that did not thrive, for she gaue it nothing but baked aples to sucke; living in this affliction void of all humane helpe, and one night bitterlie lamenting, she had recourse to the compassionate Father saying, Gracious Father S. Francis assist me if thou please in this extreme necessity. The true louer of innocencie, incontinently appeared to this good old woman, and said: Woman that with so many teares hast called on me, put the mouth of the child against thy breast: for God will giue thee milke abundantlie to nurse it. This old woman believing layd the little child to her breasts, and found them to be full of milke, which continued as long as was needfull to giue the child to suck, which is a thing well knowne to be against the course of nature, but worthy of such an Intercessour. This admirable fact was diuulged ouer all the contrie, whence the people from all partes flocked to see this old woman and her sonne, as a matter worthy of deepe admiration: for which they praysed God, and his faithfull seruant sainct Francis.

In the city of Spoletum, a man and his wife had but one only child, for whose deformity they continually lamented: for he had his armes fastened to his neck, his knees to his breast, and his feet to his hippes, and breifly so deformed that he seemed not the child of a man: in which respect his Father and Mother beholding him, they seemed to see their reproach and disgrace, and particulerlie the mother in beholding such an horrible creature to be borne of her bodie: wherefore she often with sighes and lamentations recommended herselfe vnto God, inuocating S. Francis to be her intercessor, beseeching him to comfort and relieve a woman so much afflicted. As she one night lamented vpon this subiect, Sainct Francis caused her to sleep, then in her dreame appeared vnto her, and with very compassionate wordes comforted her, and at length wished her to carry her child to a church verie neere thervnto, and dedicated to his name, promising her that after she had washed him with the water of the Couent-well, in the name of God he should receaue his perfect shape and health. But the woman esteeming this to be an ordinarie dreame, affected not the wordes of the

An old woman had milke to nurse a child by the meries of S. Francis.

And a monaster was cured.

Kkk

S. who

S. who an other time appeared vnto her redoubling the same admonishment, which she no more beleueed then the former: The glorious saint returned the third time, and himselfe conducted her safe a sleep together with her sonne to the dore of the Couent, where he left her & disappeared. Certaine great Ladies of deuotion comming thither in the meane time, awakened this woman who much amazed to finde her selfe there, related vnto them the vision and so in company they presented the child vnto the Religious, who incontinentlie drew water out of the well, and the most honourable and worthyest lady with her owne handes washed the child, which being washed; his lymmes miraculously became duely placed, to the wonderfull astonishment of those present, perceauing what the mercy of God was in our behalfe, by the great merittes of his seruant.

Of the miracles wrought by S. Francis by the signe of the crosse.

THE XX CHAPTER.

*S. FRANC.
cured one
deuout
vnto him
of an in-
curable
disease
in his
legge.*

T Here was a man in the towne of Chora within the diocesse of Hostia, which was so depriued of the force and strength of one foot, that he could neither goe nor any way moue the same: wherefore despairing by humane art to cure him, he began one night to discourse with S. Francis as if he had bin present, complaining before his altare in these wordes. S. Francis helpe me, remember what I haue done in thy seruice, carrying thee with such deuotion on my asse, I haue kissed thy holy handes and feet, and haue bin euer most deuout vnto thee; I loue thee cordiallie, consider therefore how I am tormented with this extreme paine. The holy Father, as approuing his discourse was moued with his iust and pious complaints, and as one that hath a continuall memory of those deuout vnto him, he appeared with one of his Religious to his freinde, euen whiles he was waking, and said: Sith thou hast called on me, I come to thee bringing wherewithall to cure thee: then comming neere him he touched his place of paine with a litle staffe, wheron was the figure of the signe Tau, the Greek letter thus made in forme of a crosse, and presentlie the apostume brake out of his legge, and his paine ceased, the said man remayning perfectly cured, and that which more augmented the miracle was, that in the place where his griefe was, the signe of Tau remayned for memory of the same. It was the seale wherewith the holy Father S. Francis sealed his letters, when he wrote to his freindes concerning any worck of charity. Now here is to be obserued, that whiles we discourse of the diuerse miracles of this glorious saint, it hap-

*What
was the
seale of
S. FRANC.*

peneth

peneth by diuine inspiration and the will of this inuincible stander-bearer of the crosse, that we end our historie with the signe of Tau and marck of our saluation, for hence may we collect, that as it was vnto him a comfort and great meritt towards his saluation, in following I E S V S as his Champion, so being now triumphant with I E S V S CHRIST, it is become vnto him an assured testimonie of his honour and glory, for great and admirable is the myserie of the crosse wherein the giftes of graces, the merittes of life, and the treasures of the wilddome of God, are very deeply couered and concealed from the wise and prudent of the world which neuertheles were entierly reuealed vnto this poore of I E S V S CHRIST, who during his life followed only the steppes of the crosse, and neuer concealed tast of any other thinge then the sweetnes of the crosse, so that in the beginning of his conuersion, he might well say with saint Paul. God forbid that I should glory, sauing in the crosse of our Lord I E S V S CHRIST: as also afterward, he might truly say, of his Rule: Peace vpon them and mercy that shall follow this Rule: but towards the end, he might more truly say with the said Apostle: I beare the markes of our Lord I E S V S in my body: and we should desire to heare those other wordes from him: The grace of our Lord I E S V S CHRIST be with your spirit brethren. Amen. The mayest thou O glorious stander-bearer of I E S V S CHRIST, most assuredly glory in the glory of the crosse of I E S V S CHRIST, because thou diddest begin by the crosse, and finally end by the crosse, and for testimonie of the crosse it hath bin manifested to all the faithfull, how glorious thou now art in heauen: so that we may securely follow them that depart out of this cruell Egypt, because the red sea being diuided by the wood of the crosse, they passed the desertes to enter into the land promised to the liuing, leauing behinde them the flood Iordan of mortality, by the merueillous carryer of this holy crosse: to the which blessed land of the the liuing, the infallible guide of our beloued I E S V S CHRIST crucified, conduct vs, by the degrees of the ladder following, his glorious seruant being our Intercessour.

Gal. 6.

Here end the miracles of the glorious Father Saint Francis Written
by Saint Bonanenture.

Kkk 2

The

A treatise wherein is discoursed, how the holy Father saint Francis attained to perfect contemplation, which hath bin transferred hither from the 37. chapter, to the end of the tenth booke, this place being more proper there vnto.

THE I. CHAPTER.

Lib. 14.

chap. 18.

Matt. 16.

IT seemeth here to good purpose, in some sort to declare the order and degrees, whereby the holy Ghost doth raise those that are his to this great and high vnion of spiritt with God, as well for a more true relation and intelligence of the perfect contemplation and vnion which the glorious Father S. Francis had with God, as for the greater comfort of the soules who desire to follow and imitate his life and exercise. Now it is to be noted, according to the doctrine of S. Augustin, that men lay two foundations, the one of perdition which is selfe-loue, and the other of saluation which is the loue of God; or else that men haue two endes, some, in God, and others in themselves, directing all their actions for themselves; our will is gouerned according to these two endes: for if it conuert it selfe vnto God, as taking him for its end, the more it disioyneth it selfe from creatures, yea from it selfe, the nearer doth it approach vnto God by obedience and charity; and perhappes with diuine assistance, to the perfect contempt and abnegation of it selfe, and to transforme it selfe entierly into the loue of God which is our end, wherein consisteth all our perfection and glory. Our Master IESVS CHRIST left vs this rule in his holy ghoipell, saying: If any man will come after me, lett him deny himselfe, lett him know how much he is deceaued that esteemeth himselfe of any worthe, lett him hate, and dye in himselfe, that he may know me, loue, and liue in me, and I in him. And as the nature of fire is to ascend on high, so the nature of a soule free and disburdened from the waight of selfe and naturall affection, is to mount and ascend into God, which is her proper place where she was created, to repose in him blessedly perfect and eternall: As it is the nature of a stone by meane of his naturall waight to decline vnto his center; so is it naturall to the hart loaden with loue of it selfe and other creatures to fall by his owne fault into hell. Lett the soule then that shall haue placed all his end in God, and desireth to ascend to the throne of grace of the true Salomon IESVS GHRIST, who being a most gracious and peaceable king, sitteth att the right hand of his Father, in whome all the desires of Angels and glorious soules are absolutelie effected; lett that soule, I say, behold in this dayes exercise, the ladder of Jacob, whose highr toucheth the heauen, and that she the more easely, and with better order ascend, she may make seauen seuerall degrees or steppes, which are so disposed by Vbertin. The first

is the tast, the second the desire, the third satiety, the fourth excessive or spirituall extasie, the fift assurance, the sixt tranquillity, God only knoweth the name of the seauenth. We attaine to the knowledge of these degrees and exercises, rather by the effectes and actions, as it is in other spirituall things, then of themselues, they being perceiued with spirituall eyes, wherto althings are apparant, but especially those that concerne the sweet effectes and graces therof. The soule therefore that will profit in them, the more that she shall finde her sight cleare to know her weakenes, shall correct herfaultes, and shall perseuer in mortification and exercise of worckes of charity, so much lesse sight, shall she haue to cast her eyes on the degree or on the height of her perfection, leauing the care therof to God alone, imploying her selfe onlie in her humility; he that hath any litle knowledge of spirituall things, will easilie comprehend, that to search after that which appertayneth only to God, to witt, to labour for perfection and not for mortification; that it followeth therof that there are so few truly spirituall and that deserue this name, though many by their profession or exercise, pretend so to be.

*Seauen
degrees
of perfe-
ction.*

Of the first degree and exercise of contemplation.

THE II. CHAPTER.

THe first degree then of contemplation, as we haue said, is the tast, wherof Dauid seemeth to speake when the saith: Tast and see how sweet God is: blessed is he that hath put all his hope in him. The Prophett speaketh to sinners, who thinck to haue no other gaine nor tast but of the world. Tast yee sinners saith he, and see your errours, and you shall know what you loose euen in this life. And as the first steppe of the ladder raiseth a man from the earth, so the exercise of this first degree, is to sequester one from finnes and the indirect way, and to loose the tast of lewd wordlie contentementes, yea to hate and detest them, so to receaue the tast, which God giueth to the soule, of a cleare conscience. Therefore his diuine Maiestie to draw vnto him the soule accustomed to sensual things, giueth vnto her spirituall consolations in the beginning, for it would be verie difficult to draw the cold and feeble soule to diuine things, without this new tast which is giuen her of God as a sensible Manna: and therefore the other exercises of this estate are true contrition, frequent confession, full satisfaction, and most profound acknowledgement of ones owne fault, ingratitude, malice, and rash presumption against God: Of which things proceed

ceed desires to satisfy the diuine iustice : for satisfaction in other respectes should already be done, being neuer weayed with sighing and repenting to haue offended God, and so with a feruent zeale of iust correction for God, to addiect himselfe to penance, to fastinges, disciplines, austerities and wachinges, labouring with great patience, to offer such prayers as proceed rather from the hart then the mouth. And because it will seeme difficult to the penitent to performe this, appearing repugnant to his nature, he must endeauour to prepare and enable his hart by pious cogitations and meditations, and by the remembrance and tast of God, as to thinck on death, on the generall iudgement, on the feare therof, on hell and the paine therof, one Paradise and the glory therof, on the benefittes and graces of his diuine Maiesty, as well in generall as in particuler bestowed on all personnes, and aboue all, lett him not forgett the palsion of our Lord IESVS CHRIST as a soueraigne benefitt of God bestowed on vs, wherein consisteth all our consolation and hope. When the sinner calleth to minde his great ingratitude towardes God, in as much as lyeth in him by his sinnes crucifying him againe, and after he had bin so dearly redeemed with his precious bloud and most cruell death, destroying himselfe againe by yelding himselfe to the deuill, to the great mispraise and contempt of his God, he cannot but carrie a great hatred to his sinnes, and desire to doe great penance: therfore that he no more erre from the way of God, he considereth how he ought to liue, he sequestreth himselfe frome idle and vnprofitable conuersations; he smothereth peruerse inclinations, and appetites, endeauouring to gett an hatred of his owne affection, a contempt of the world, and finally a victory of him selfe to yeld himselfe absolutely vnto God, IESVS CHRIST taught this first degree to his seruant Francis. when appearing vnto him att the beginning of his conuersion he told him that it was necessarie for him to chaunge the corrupted and infected tast which he had, and to make him finde tast in that which till then he had misprised, and that what soeuer he had found pleasing should proue distastfull and bitter. I know not indeed of what Saint are recorded greater exercises in this separation, deeper foundation of penance, and more labours then of him; and doubles it was requisite for him, for he was to ascend vnto such a perfection, and to be an example in the church, to fly the world, to make his habitation in solitary places, and desert woodes, to renounce monie, and his fathers patrimonie euen to this shirt, to displaint himselfe from his kinred and freindes, from conuersations, and ordinarie courtes of life, euen by the roote, to trans-plant himselfe into God, and with such courage that it was not needfull for him to fly into the desert thence-

thenceforward to sequester him selfe from the world. He powered out an abundant quantitie of teares and sighes, with a feeling cōpulsion meditating on the passion of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, wherof he learned to liue in such nuditie, fastinges and intollerable labours, and to haue patience in such and so manie contempts, and thence alio proceeded his desires dailie to encrease his penance, and to support the greatest affrontes for the loue of God. All these thinges and many other, did not only enrich his soule, remouing her from all worldlie and sensuall tast, but did procure in him euen a distast of all thinges present, yea caused diuine thinges to be afterward more agreeable vnto him, and God alwayes conserued him in this estate, and appeared often times vnto, would also afterward permitte him greater afflictions and possesse him with greater crosses, for he prepared him to be a valiant and inuincible Captaine of his penitentes, and an example of perfect and couragious warryers; and also told him that the kingdome of heauen should suffer violence, *Matt. xi.* and that the violent should beare it a way, not those of tender and delicates spirittes.

*Of the second degree, to arrive to perfection, called
Desire.*

THE III. CHAPTER.

THe second degree is desire, for as saint Gregoire, saith, *Hom. 30.* diuine thinges being tasted are desired, and not tasted, *upon the* seeme without sauour: in worldly matters it is contrary, *Gospells.* for the desire therof is alwayes best. There groweth in the soule so extreme a hungar, and a such a thirst after this tast, and after a triall of this diuine sweetnes, that no creature or temporall consolation can satisfie her but God alone, whome she loueth: And because she neither can, nor doth yet deserue to obtaine the food of the great, knowing her owne infirmitie and litle meritt, she remaineth greedilie hungrie after temporall thinges, and beggeth the mites of the table of God, seeking them on earth, meditating on his life and conuersation, worckes and examples, yea she seeketh them in his creatures where his steppes, marks and trates are represented vnto her, and in his Saintes where she findeth most euident testimonies of her God, and often times she heareth his voice and seeth his presence, and this estate is like to that, [wherof the espouse speaketh in the Canticles: I adiuire you, if *Cant. 5.* you finde my beloued, to tell him that I languish and loose my selfe.

THE CHRONICLES

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1048. 14. *15.* selfe for his loue. It is also expedient in this estate to make simplicities in workes and wordes, for the great excesse of new desires, as new spirituall wine: of these desires, when thy are reall, doth grow, the imitation of the life of IESVS CHRIST, and of his humility, as much as may be, that he may be found and possessed: In that respect doth our Lord call himselfe the path and way, for we must walke by him, and his steppes are, as himselfe affirmeth, humility, meeknes, patience charity, prayers, and finally his crosse and passion; for the seruant is not greater then his Lord, nor the disciple about his master. This is the somme of whatsoeuer may be said or written. It is the light of the diuine will, wherein consisteth the rule and lesson of true wildome. It is the shortest and secretest way that we can walke, which openeth and discouereth vnto vs the most eminent master of truth, wherein walking, he taught men what way they should vndertake. Lett no man thinck that there is an other way more direct, to obtaine of God true charity, then that of labours and the exercises of vertues. This exercise consisteth in three pointes: the first, with a sincere hart to demaund of God the knowledge of ones offences mortall, and veniall; together with an interior sorrow for them, and a shunning of all occasions of mortall sinnes, and distraction of spirit: the second, to desire the good of our neighbour, as our owne, for whome God hath so much endured, and to asist him corporally and spirittually in our prayers, praying for our freindes, and ennemies, and for all those whome God will haue prayed for: the third, is to desire with a firme resolution to imitate the life of IESVS CHRIST in his conuersion, as well in body as spirit, and to demaund of God that he will vnite him to his sonne, and that nothing may be found in his bowels but IESVS CHRIST crucified, demaunding also the vertues that may in any sort make vs like vnto IESVS CHRIST, as pouerty, humility, and simplicity, for in this manner exercising our selues in these vertues, we attaine a true and seruient desire, and a true thirst of the loue of our Saviour IESVS CHRIST, and it wil be no paine or trouble vnto vs to be exercised in them, therbie to obtaine the good which wee desire.

The glorious Father S. Francis, ascended to this degree, when with a seruient and perseuerant desire, demaunding and finding his deare and beloued Lord, the Euangelicall perfection, and the Apostolicall life were reuealed vnto him, and as if he had thenceforward began; he couered himselfe with one only garment shaped in forme of a crosse; desiring no other thing then IESVS CHRIST crucified, esteeming himselfe neuer satisfied with pouerty, humility, and misprize, to imitate his Saviour I. C. He would not seeme humble and holy; but a sinner and wretched, he then exceedingly reioyced, when he was contemned and little esteemed

med, and was much displeased, when he was honoured: as other men accustom to hate their ennemyes, and to persecute them, so one the contrarie, he loued with all his hart those that did persecute him, and hated himselfe as his owne capitall ennemye, and not others, well knowing that the world and the deuill as our principall ennemies make warre against vs with our owne weapons, and not with other instrumentes. Therefore ouercomming our selues, we shall triumph ouer all our potent ennemies: he endeauoured by examples of euery kind of vertue and with zeale of the saluation of soules, for which I. C. suffered, to draw them to the estate of Euangelicall perfection, he did not exercise his disciples, but in the imitation of the pouertie humilitie and patience of IESVS CHRIST, and the meditation of his passion: for he wel knew that the more vertues we possesse, the greater progresse doe we make in prayer, and without the same none att all, such were his ceremonies and mortifications, such the edifices and exercises of his first order, to finde I. C. in continuall labour, abstinences, and prayers, and to carry the woundes of our Lord I. C. in his body, with the difficulty of strict pouerty, and with this innocencie, purity and Christian simplicity, he surpassed those that are cloathed only with the exterior leaues of ceremonies, to vndertake the way of perfection: and checked those that cloathed themselves exteriorly with the said ceremonies, only to couer their imperfections.

Of the third degree of perfection, called Satiety.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

THe third degree, is Satiety; when the soule commeth to loath terrestriall thinges, richesse, honoures, yea the repose of his owne life, respecting all as nought, conceauing a dislike to see, or speake of any worldlie matters, for whereas the soule doeth loue & desire only God, and findeth no repose but in him, hauing experience that the creatures hinder his seruice, though louing them vnder pretext of deuotion, they all neuertheles seeme displeasing, and withall knowing that all humane affections and motions, all liberall artes & sciences, all subtilty of spirittes, all exquisite theologie, and other curious sciences, cannot giue peace nor satiate our hart, if they be vsed with pride, and that only the diuine loue can performe the same in an humble hart, and mortified in his proper desires and opinions, which will not be surprised more or lesse, in any other thing, nor affecteth other power or knowledge, then how to loue his God, and how to ridde himselfe of all vaine cogitations, and of his proper complacence and curiosiry to

comprehend lofty and secret matters, and to proceed in a singularity of life and exercises: the property of this estate, is to support the tentations, the terrours and deceits of the devils, because our soule resisteth not flesh and blood only, but the spirittes and powers of darcknes, surmounting all other creatures, yea himsele, and possessing God alone in his only desire. Our soule hath an other property, not only seeking & thenceforward finding her beloued in creatures, by meditations and imaginations, framed by the vnderstanding, but often, without attending and knocking att the dore, the feruent desires & enflamed sighes which she breatheth out for her loue, conducteth her in, and then she conuerseth with and freely heareth her God, because she incontinently arriueth to that estate, wherof our Lord IESVS CHRIST spake: I call you no longer seruantes, but freindes: such are the effects of feruent loues that transport the soule into God, to make her one spiritt with him and one will, and as this loue is supernaturall and diuine, incomparablie of more efficacie, then the naturall, it doth consequentially with a fastened knott and bond of charity, conioyne the spiritt with God: So that we may say, in this estate such a loue worketh three effectes or offices; The first, to deprive the soule of all kind and quality of loue, except the loue of God, that she may no more be disioyned from him, conformable to those wordes of the Apostle saint Paul: No man can hereafter separate vs from the charity and loue of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. The second is, to giue no place to idlenes, for as saith the moral saint Gregory. He that is idle loueth not, and therefore his worke is to labour with an appetite sweet and sauourous in God, and to run vnto him withall his hart, as to his loueraigne Good, and to keep his spiritt settled and combined in him, continually enflaming his desires to a cruell and continuall warre, vpon such discord, that can neuer haue peace with the cares, disordinate palsions, and naturall desires, which labour to satiate him in other places, whereas this loue endeauoureth att least to keep him alwayes concerning the memorie and the desires, being separated from all terrestriall cares and conuersations, with the feare of the staine which veniall disorders leaues in the soule, and the impediment which they procure to the continuall amorous affection of God, which caueth the soule especially to loue and desire solitude, and to be sequestred from all creatures; for as the Adamant draweth iron vnto it, so God, being loued, draweth vnto him the louer into a solitarie place, and sequestreth him from humane conuersation, that he may tast diuine. The third office whence this second proceedeth, is that this loue neuer ceaseth to growe no otherwise then fire, which hauing matter, neuer faileth to encrease. As then our Lord I. C. is infinitely worthy to be loued, and

Ephes. 6.

IOAN. 15.

Rom. 8.

that charity alwayes findeth in him matter to encrease, and more and more every hower to dilate it selfe, so this augmentation of loue hath neuer end in this life, so that the proper office of this loue is, to constrain a man to make progresse in his perfection of life, and with a continuall warre, against luke warmnesse.

It is easie to be collected in diuers places out of the Legend, rule and life of S. Frâcis, how much this degree of loue and perfection made him alwayes ioyfull, and content in his pouerty: it there appeareth how much he abhorred and shunned the honours and contentments of the world, and with what vnion of spirit he conceaued tast and satisfaction in prayer; For this occasion he would that his Religious should be alwayes ioyfull exteriorly and interiorly, as men contented in the true graces which they receaued of the mercie of God; this satiety which he had in God, hindered him from desiring sciences and honours for his Religion, as the greedy of this world desire and procure, but he would that only the pouerty, and humility of his Lord I. C. should alwayes be, and shine in his Order, and that there one should neuer satisfie and content himselfe enough, in the following, imitating and louing of I. C. The wicked spirittes could not endure this loue that burned in him perpetually, and therefore they neuer omitted to tempt and terrifie him; endeauouring to distract him; but finding nothing in him wherof to take hold, he being naked and deprived of all earthly thinges; they presumed by their horrors and terrous to make him stopp and tourne his course. The continuall lentes which he kept in perpetual silence, and in solitarie places, discouer how incomparable he was, and his continuall seruour, in the exercise of prayer, and spirituall profit in all kind of vertues, as also his ordinarie watchfulnes ouer his senses and his body, likewise his manner of life alwayes apart, except when he travelled for the saluation of soules, as one that had in God alone his repose and satiety.

*Of the fourth degree, to ascend vnto perfection, called spirituall Excesse
or Extasie.*

THE V. CHAPTER.

THe fourth degree, is extasie, spirituall excesse, or dronkenness of spirit, which proceedeth of the satiety of the soule, made droncken with the diuine loue of the Holy Ghost, without any water of our imaginations, and humane fantasies, which forsake vs not without difficulty, if God take not the soule by the hand & draw it vnto him,

him, causing al the senses to remaine without, depriued of their functiō, the soule being imployed secretly with her God; yea it see meth to the soule that she endureth the like, for being with God, she is more about then in her selfe, and therefore feeling she feelth not; and feeling she feelth not. For she being pure and cleare from all corporall images which are her irons, and the matter of her prayers, she feeleth only the effectes, with the workes of the diuine presence and charity. And therefore he that is rayled to this degree of perfection, doth accustomme to exercise lesse meditations, how pious soeuer, vsing them only, to create in his soule admirations, deuotions, and seruours towards his beloued God, drawing the sparkes of loue from his hart with those meditations as with a perfect fire-steel, which most commonly is in men more hard then a flint-stone, for as the way of the vnderstanding proceedeth not of humane stile, though it be directed vnto God, the knowledge notwithstanding proceeding in the soule, by the loue and the will, its charity is neuer so intentiue in the contemplatiue life; and in the proper mortification as vnto the exercise of vertues, neither is this kinde of seeking and ascending to the admiration and deuotion of God, so perfect, it is more ordinary in the learned and prudent personnes and of subtrill spirit, in whome the intelligence proceedeth alwayes vnto the will, and this loue, by meditation and consideration: But the affectiue way is farre more breife to ascend vnto God: the principall therein is the will, for she hath her exercises ordinarily in desires, in inspirations, and interiour sighes in verie frequent manner vnto her beloued, which she performeth by iaculatorie prayers, more ardent then long meditations of the spirit, wherof although she make vse as of the foundation, as it were to recomfort her owne infirmitie, she notwithstanding vseth them, to raise the soule to her God, by a desire of loue, which encreasing, she vseth the action of the will which is to loue, because it hath more entrie with God then the action of the vnderstanding, which is to know the way verie breife for perfection, and easy to practise, because it needeth neither science nor many bookes, in which the most simple idiot profiteth much more then the learned, God disposing according to his liberality, that the soule of him who seeketh him without meane, be rather instructed by him vnto his conuersation: but this instruction is perticulerlie necessarie to them that are alreadie arrived to the loue which causeth them the extasies, to the end they setle not all their perfection in the deuotion and sensible tast which they receaue (for finally it is an instrument only for spirituall charity) and that those impetuosities of deuotion, and subtrill conceited actes, make them not presumptuous, because this matter may be obtained by

naturall exercise, and without grace : But lett them diligentlie regard and consider in themselves if they receaue this diuine grace with fruit, and if they profit in true mortification, and abnegation of their proper will, so that it be prompt to execute the diuine will, receauing with patience and contentment of hart, what soeuer it shall please God to ordaine, as well in exteriour as interiour labours, euen the losse of consolations, yea temptations: For if it seeme to them that they are lesse obliged to these later then the other, they will haue no care to seeke the exercise of vertues, but will apply all their endeauour to gett this sweetnes of deuotion; though they fall into extasy seauen times in a day, they will profit litle; and will abuse the diuine grace wrongfully and to their damnation; for they satisfie their pleasure with more diligence, then the will of God, and such shall finde in themselves rather, palsionate cogitations, and wordes of presumption, esteeming themselves perfect, and resting assured to be in the way of perfection, iudgeing others that walke not their way to proceed erroneously, then to haue true feare and humility. The property then of this way, is when without deceit, as God sendeth mentall extasies vnto the soule, eleuating her to the imbracementes of diuine loue, so the soule being retourned to her selfe, worcketh merueillous excesses of humility and patience, the example of all vertues, and particularly in the amorous compasion of the palsion of IESVS CHRIST, whose excessiue tormentes being contemplated by the soule, she burneth, and cannot containe hir in her selfe, for the great apprehension which she hath of such a charity, which is such, as she desireth to repay IESVS CHRIST this his glorious death, by her owne life exposed to martyrdom.

We may coniecture in what perfection this degree of the loue of the holy Ghost, eleuated S. Francis, wrought by frequent and excessiue corporall deuotions, wherein he was swallowed vp, being a figure of many greater eminent conceated worckes of the spirit, so that for the most seruent loue he carryed to IESVS CHRIST crucified, he trauelled to seeke martyrdom. But because his admirable excesses of prayer, humility, and other vertues, haue bin already recorded, it is not necessary to repeat them, it sufficeth to haue only refreshed the memory of the readers therewith, as with a matter worthy to be noted.

Of the fift degree of perfection, called Assurance.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THe fift degree is called assurance because hauing in the precedent estate tasted seruent charity, it expelleth all feare out of the soule,

Rom. 8.

A worthy
similitud.

which doth not repute her selfe only resigned and perfectly settled, as much as is possible for her, in the diuine will and disposition, but doth euen desire really and with seruour to expose her selfe to all labours, to conforme her selfe to her laboured IESVS CHRIST, and so the remaineth without cause of feare: for albeit God should cast her into hell, the same should be her glory, it being the will of God: and besides, she hath such a strong hope, and assured persuation of the grace and fauour of her God, that it is impossible for her to be separated from him, saying with S. Paul: For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, neither things present, nor things to come, neither might, nor height, nor depth, nor other creature, shalbe able to separate vs from the charity of God which is in IESVS CHRIST our lord. Let vs therefore know that this word *assurance* is rather a name accidental, & of the effect this estate, then essential; because the root and essence therof, is the coniunctiue loue, which the soule possesseth: but because this name hath a secret and hidden signification, though diuers know it not, which is manifest only to God, & the soule wherein it worcketh this merueillous vnion, we haue signified it by the name of the effect; whereby the soule attayneth to make her selfe a spirit, by the continuall nouriture of grace and charity, & by the merueillous vnio of her loue with God. For as a droppe of water mingled with wine, looseth its nature, & assumeth that of wine, as also the colour and fauour; so the soule that perfectly loueth in this degree, falling into the infinite diuine charity, without yet loosing her nature, is conuerted into the diuine loue, according to the office and institutio of life, and all her powers remayne conected in the tast of the loue of God: & albeit our nature is not chaunged in this diuine vnion touching her naturall essence, yet doth it chaunge many inclinations & conditioins, & obtayneth others, beyond the forces of nature created, as we see the fire worcketh in iron, which it deprieth of the hardnes, coldnes, and blacknes, which are proper vnto it, & endueth it with other contrary and more excellēt qualities, yet without chaūging the nature therof: so the soule farre more enflamed & vnited in the diuine loue, being endued with other life, motio & force, remaineth without any feare or dulnesse & without diffidence, so light and easy to transforme it selfe into God her beloued, by a vnitue desire, as the diuine fire that burneth in her, and maketh her in that manner seruēt in her spirituall operations; in such sort the soule remaineth filled with this diuine vnion, & replenished with so great seruour, that she att their first arriual putteth to flight the flies of contrary temptations; and doth more annihilate and mortifie her selfe in one act of the will, then others can doe in much time. She likewise receaueth a penetratiue vertue to participate with all creatures, without any impedimēt because she easily

is vnited to her God; thus doth she dispose her selfe to receaue greater grace of God, becaule she approacheth neerer, and is rayled vnto the perpetuall fountaine, and to the Father of lightes, the eternall God. The property of this estate of *Assurance*, is to haue God alwayes in her hart present in euery place, neuer separating her selfe frō him: which she performeth by meane of a liuing loue, and cōtinuall memory of him: for she is present, & liueth in his armes, freed frō all action, sauing that wherein her beloued God employeth her, he being euer presēt with her. The holy Father knew that he had attayned this degree of vnitue loue, in the cōtinuall memory, and diuine cōmunication, which he had without disturbance, as well in the Monasteries as in hermitages, alone and in company, were he employed in the doctrine of saluation of soules, or in prayer: And it was euen apparant that the holy Father S. Francis had obtained this degree of perfection, in the conuersion of his senses, powers, and inclinations into God: for he seemed to be retourned into the state of innocencie, so much were his interiour powers submitted to the empire and domination of the soule, which was so perfectly vnited vnto her God in the light and frequent reuelations which she receaued of the diuine presence, whence proceeded that he gloryed in his labours, and in merueilous assurance of his saluation, which was by speciall diuine grace reuealed vnto him.

Of the sixth degree of perfection, called Tranquility.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe estate of perfection called *Tranquility*, is in the sixth degree where there is such peace and contentment, that the soule liueth as it were in silence and repose as in a sleepy slumber on the brest of God, so that she may say with S. Paul: that she no more liueth in herselfe, but that **I E S V S C H R I S T** liueth and reigneth in her. But three things should preceed this life so singuler, this sanctity and conuersation with God, this perfect charity towards God and our neighbour, this feeling of the diuine familiarity; First, a perfect mortification in workes and affaires of the world, in such sort that the soule for her owne respect haue no contentment in any creature what soeuer, and lesse in her selfe, but onlie in her Creatour; The second, that she be distracted from all spirituall consolations, wherein she taketh comfort and reioyceth for her owne repose and tast: becaule often times in the spirittes euen of them that vtterly shunne spirituall thinges, doe grow great affections and spirituall delectations, wherein they finde consolations
for

for themselves, but God seldome, or neuer: and so they shutt the gate to the true light, and this happeneth becaule they propose not God for the end of their exercises purelie and without meane of any creature. Now this sincere intention and renunciation, as it is far more perfect, so is it much more difficult then the former: therefore also the soule that doubteth therof holdeth her selfe absolutely in the hand of God, as well for matters of the world as of the body & soule. The third is, that with an assiduous dilligēce she procureth to conuert her selfe free and peaceable into this most pure and most simple good, which is God, remitting her spiritt into him not in part, but absolutely considering God, & enjoying him as it pleaseth him to communicate himselfe vnto her in this life, for the excellēcie & diuine prerogatiues, by which we call him with diuers names, Almighty God, most wise, most good, most iust. For so much as the holy scripture attributeth vnto him these names and qualities, for the diuers effects which he worcketh in his creatures; wherby we come to the knowledge of him, for the diuine essence exceedeth all titles, all tearmes and inaginations of our vnderstāding: and when the soule cometh to contemplate God in the said māner, she attayneth the quiet and peaceable estate of contēplation, though it be not cōtinuall but for a very short time in regard of the infirmity and weight of the mortallity wherin she liueth. The property of this estate is, that the soule be instructed & addressed towards God, in all her actions & cogitations, remote from the way of humane prudence, considering that God is the guide and master of euery estate of spirittuall perfection, and that he alone knoweth the necessities, the capacity, & the intētions of the spirit of man, and therefore he alone can conduct & guide vs in the most commodious and most certaine way. They therefore doe erre who by their counsaile and doctrine will, not only persist in their own opinions, but also admonish others: for taking on them to be guides of the blinde, they doe not perceauē that theselues being blind & presuming to know the necessity of the feeble, both the one and the other doe oftē fall into the deepe gulfe of error. It is also the property of this degree of perfectiō, that the man which hath attained the same is conuersant in all the exercises of the other foresaid degrees, & especiallie of humility, of the imitation & memory of I. C. wherein he layeth a deep foundation, that the edifice of his contemplation fall not: but be conserued and augmented by the benignity of IESVS CHRIST.

Among other effectes wherby the holy Ghost discouered to haue communicated this height of perfectiō vnto his seruāt Fr. one was the manifested and almost continuall spiritt of prophēcie, wherwith he endued him wherby he seemed peaceably to enjoy the contēplatiō of God & a diuine conference and familiarity. And by how much he was sequestred & dis-

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joyned from all the world and from himselfe, so much was he perfectly and intentiuely alwayes employed in the exercises of the spirit. By reason also of them, his life and perfection is praised and preached, considering that thereby he is admitted to the tranquillitie of the diuine contemplation.

Of the seauenth degree of perfection.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THere is no man that with humane wordes can say any thing of the seauenth degree of perfection: which is a priuiledge rarely communicated of God, such that the wordes of Angels would be defectiue and seeme barbarous in the explication thereof. Some SS. haue experienced it in this flesh, God communicating it vnto the suddenly as to passengers, & now they enioy and possesse it manifestly without limitation or measure of faith. It is that, which the iust doe seele in glory, being of the number of those things which the eyes cannot behold, nor the eares heare, nor the hartes of men comprehend, which God hath prepared for the that loue him perfectly. And as the cōtemplatiue S. Bernard saith, it is not permitted to all, or in one same place and degree to enioy the secrett and glorious presence of God, but according as the celestially Father determineth to each one, because we haue not elected God, but he vs, who hath giuen place proper to each one of his SS. & each one is where he hath bin placed. S. Mary Magdalē found place & to her was graunted the feet of our Lord I. C. S. Thomas the Apostle was admitted to his side, S. Peter to the bosome of the Father: S. Iohn to the breast of I. C. S. Paul was eleuated to the third heauē: the sacred woundes of our Lord I. C. were cōmunicated vnto S. Francis. Who the shall presume to haue a desire to know the perfectiō & merittes of such a greatnes, as S. Mary Magdalē reposed on the bed of true penance, S. Thomas in the light of truth, S. Peter in the chaire of faith. S. Iohn in the fourneau of charity. S. Paul in the throne of wisdom, and S. Francis in the loue & trāsformation of I. C. we cānot, for it is not permitted vs: but only to follow & imitate the SS. in the worckes & perfections which are mercifully reuealed by our Lord I. C. & therefore to giue infinite thanckes to the author of all goodnes, that by the merittes of his sainctes, by their intercession and his diuine grace, he conduct vs to that perfection in this life; and that in the other we may enioy the eternall glorie. Amen.

Esay. 64.

1. Cor.

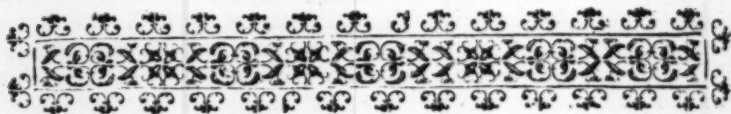
vin. 2.

The end of the third booke, and first volume of Chronicles of the Frere Minors, wherein is contained the life, death, and miracles of the Seraphicall

Father S. Francis.

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THE



THE FOUVRTH BOOKE
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS.

CONTEINING THE MARTYRDOME
of diuers Religious of the Order of the Seraphicall
Father S. Francis. Translated by the
partie aforesaid.

THE SECOND VOLVME.

*How S. Francis sent certaine Religious to preach the faith of
Iesus Christ, vnto the Mores in Spaine.*

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



IN the yeare of grace 1219. the glorious Father S. Francis kept the great generall chapter att Pentecost, wherat all the Religious of his Order assembled, as it hath bin amplie declared in the first booke of the first volume of these present Chronicles. This Chapter was held eleuen years after that Pope Innocent the third had with his owne mouth confirmed the Order of the Frere Minors, & the fourth yeare of the Popedome of Pope Honorious the third of blessed memory, who then piously gouerned the Church. In this Chapter, it was reuealed vnto S. Francis, that he should againe send his Religious ouer the world, to preach the faith of IESVS CHRIST, as well amongst Christians as Pagans. After this, the most capable Religious of the Order

der were chosen for Prouincials, S. Francis applyed himselfe to obey the holy will of God. And because the rage of the Mores was spread ouer three partes of the world, Asia, Africa, and Europe; he resolved to send his Religious into those partes to preach the truth of the faith of IESVS CHRIST, to reduce the Pagans from their damnable errours: And to make a beginning, he chose Asia for himselfe, whither he went with eleven of his Brethren, and preached to the Soldan and the Mores of his kingdome. He sent Brother Giles into Africa with Religious of like seruour and deuotion; who thincking to preach to the Mores; were apprehended by Christians and very vnwillingly brought back into Italy. He sent six Italian Religious of very perfect life, into Spaine, where the Emperour Miramolin of Marocco persecuted the Christians. The said Religious were, Brother Vital, Brother Berard, Brother Peter, Brother Adiutus, Brother Accursus, and Brother Otto: of whome, the first, Brother Vital, was by the holy Father constituted their superiour, Brother Berard was an excellent preacher in the Arabian tongue; Brother Otto, was a Preist, Brother Adiutus and Brother Accursus were lay Brethren, (the rule so tearming the Religious that keep not the quier.) Now saint Francis hauing called them, said: My children, God hath commanded me to send you to preach the holy faith vnto the Mores and to impugne the sect of Mahomet: and therefore my freindes, hold your selues ready to execute his holy will in such sort as you shall see cause. Goe yee I say, my beloued ioyfully preparing your soules to the crowne which it shall please his diuine Maiesty to bestow vpon you: performing his holy will according as you shall feele your selues inspired. They as obedient children, only bended their heades, and crossed their armes, expecting his holy benediction: but the holy Father first made them this exhortation: My deere children, I haue certaine wordes to deliuer you, that you may the better effect this commandement of God, to his glorie and the saluation of your soules. Be yee carefull to keepe *Exhortations* peace among your selues, and be not Brothers so much in habitt *tations* and profelion, as in spirit and will. Next, haue speciall care to fly to *certaine of* enuie, which was the first cause of our damnation; support with *his Reli-* patience, and be ioyfull in persecutions, and humble before God *gious* and men, and by this meane, you shall obtaine victorie against *which* your ennemis visible and inuisible. Be yee mindefull to imitate *he sent to* with all your power, our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and to *the In-* follow him in the strictest manner you can in all the three vowes: in *fidels.* obedience, obeying your superiour, as he one earth obeyed his parentes: in pouerty, liuing therin as he did, for he would be borne, liue, and dye poore, and did alwayes preach pouerty to teach vs the same: and in chastity, liuing and persisting chaste, not only in bodie, but euen in spi-

ric: fith our Lord so much loued this vertue, that he would be borne of a virgin, and presently after his Natiuity, would haue for his first frutes, the holie Virgin Innocentes: and being on the Crosse, he would dye betwene two virgins, his Blessed Mother, and S. Iohn the Euangelist. Cast all your cogitations and hopes in God, and he will asfist and conduct you. Carry with you the rule and the Breuiary, and say the diuine office the most deuoutly you can: Lett Brother Vital be your superiour, and therfore obey him entierly; but aboue all, be mindefull to meditate cōtinually on the pafsion of our lord IESVS CHRIST: for that is it which shall make all incommodities sweet vnto you, and all trauell pleasing in this long iorney into Spaine which you are to attempt, and in the conuerlation and commerce which yee are to haue with the Mores, the ennemies of their Creatour. Beleeue, I pray you, that there is nothing doth separate you from me, but the glorie of God, and the saluation of soules, for, but for that I would neuer disioyne you from me. And God knoweth the greife and affliction which my hart feeleth for your departure, though in deed, your prompt obedience doth much comfort me, but it is necessarie that we preferre the will of our lord, before our owne.

These good Religious began then out of loue to weep bitterlie, and affectionatelie recommended themselues to his prayers, wherein next vnto God they reposed more confidence then in any other thing, saying vnto him: Father send vs whither you shall please, we are ready to accomplish what soeuer God by you shall command. But withall we beseech you to remember, that we goe among most cruel men, whose tongue is vnknowne vnto vs, as also are their manners and behaiour: besides we know them to be the ennemies of Christians, desiring nothing more then to drinck their bloud, and ours with so much more fury and pafsion, when they shall know we endeavour to conuert their people; for accomplishmēt wherof, we acknowledged our forces to be most infirme and our selues very insufficient, if the mercy of God doe not by your prayers asfist vs: and therfore we recommending vs vnto them, demaund your holy benediction, that we may vndergoe this obedience to the honour of God and the saluation of our owne and the Infidels soules. S. Francis then lifting his eyes all bathed with teares towards heauen, blessed them in this manner: The benediction of God the Father, the loue of the Sonne our Redeemer IESVS, and the grace of the holy Ghost discend vpon you as it discended on the Apostles: conduct, comfort and fortifye you in afflictions, that you may valiantly resist, couragiously assault, and gloriously subdue your ennemies, fith God sendeth you for his glory and seruice. And feare not, for God goeth with you to be your protector. So being full of teares he

*The benediction
which S.
Francis
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dismissed them: and these Apostolicall Religious tooke their iorney conformably to the Rule of the holy Ghospell, on foote, without mony, *Luc. 10.* scrip, or staffe, bare-foote, with one only coate, poore course and all patched: but yet in exchange of all this, they had the grace of God, that safelie and securely conducted them into Spaine.

How Brother Vitall fell sicke in Spaine, and would that leauing him alone in the hospitall, his Companions should proceed on other iourney: and of his death.

THE II. CHAPTER.

THese good Religious being arriued in Arragon, Brother Vital their superiour, fell sicke and kept his bedde, the others expected there some time to see the issue of this sicknes, which daily encreasing, Brother Vital said to his companions: My beloued Brethre, you see my sicknes is violent, and what wilbe the issue therof, I know not: wherefore I will no longer detaine you from proceeding about that which hath bin enioyned vs: it hauing bin alwayes my desire to accōpany you if it pleased God, who I suppose hath ordained that I proceed no farther, in respect that being too great a sinner, I am not perhapps worthy of your cōpany, or to be employed in so worthy an office. It is therefore necessary, that you leaue me in this hospitall, and that you apply your selues to this holy enterprife of the conuersion of this people to God, who hath thus farre conducted you by obedience: and be not greiued to leaue me here alone, for his diuine Maiesty will prouide for me: Proceede then on your iourney, accomplish the will of God, and be mindefull of the admonitions of our holy Father, with a speciall care not to transgresse them: and pray to God for me, constituting Brother Bernard the preacher to be their superiour. The poore Religious hauing heard the said proposition, with extreme sorowfull and sobbing sighes, that sufficiently discouered the bitterness that afflicted their spirit, they bowed downe their heades, calling God to witnesse of the greife they had to leaue him so alone: but becaule their obediēce vnto S. Francis and him so required, they acknowledged themselves ready to obey: and so hauing receaued his benediction, after they had louingly and charitably embraced each other, they departed, beseeching him by his prayers to obtaine of God that they might againe see one another at least in Paradise. This poore Religious remayning then alone in affliction dayly weakened, till hauing vnderstood the martyrdome of his companions, and giuen thanckes to God for it, he was so afflicted for not participating with them, and for hauing lost that crowne, that burning

ning with charity towardes God, this fire in such sort augmented that by his good will and desire, he shortly after receaued the same crowne in his bedd, making of himselfe a gratefull and pleasing sacrifice vnto his diuine Maiesty, and so hastened to meet them in the other world. Thus much for Brother Vitall. We must now discourse of the combat of his companions, who still marching further on, into Spaine, euen vnto Portugall, neuer ceassed in time and place conuenient to preach vnto both Catholiques, and heretiques, wherof then the number was great in Spaine, and euery where produced fruit most pleasing to the almighty, whose grace had conioyned them together.

How the five Religious arriued att Conimbria, Where they prophesied vnto the queene her death, and their owne Martyrdome.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe said Religious being arriued at Conimbria a famous city in regard that it was the vniuersity of the kingdome of Portugall, as also being very ancient and right noble, there they found the queene Vraca wife of king Alphonfus the secōd, who incontinently inuited them vnto her, & entertayned thē with great deuotiō, as exceedingly affected vnto their Order, and then very louingly demaūded of thē whence they came & whither they intended, and withall offered to releiue thē in all their occurrēces. They breifely answered her & discouered vnto her their designe: to witt, that they were sent by their Generall Brother Francis, to preach the faith of IESVS CHRIST to Infidels. But the queene not content with this slight narratiō, putt thē into discourse of diuers spirituall matters, as one more thirsty of the word of our lord then a hinde of fresh water. With whose discourse finding her selfe exceedingly edified and cōforted, & perceauing their extreme seruour, and to what degree of the fauour of God their merittes had rayfed thē; she drew them a part, & cōiured them in his name for whose loue they had resolved euen to endure death, so much to gratifie her, as by prayer to procure reuelation frō God of the time and hower of her death: not admitting their excuses which were, that it would be a great temerity & presumption to seeke to know the secretes which God for deepe & great cōsiderations would not haue knowne vnto mē: adding withall that they were not worthy to obtaine the same, & diuers other such reasons; but she so importuned them, that they were att length cōstraynd to accord vnto her: & hauing to this end applyed theselues to prayer, they vnderstood frō God that, and more then they demaūded, wherpō they went vnto the queene, and thus spake vnto her: Madame, lett it not, if you please, be troublelome vnto you
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to vnderſtānd that which you haue ſo inſtātly required of vs: and ſo much the leſſe becauſe we aſſure you that no creature loueth you ſo much as God, who will in no ſort diſpoſe of you but for your good, and greater glory. Know then that you ſhall dye before your huſbānd and in ſhort time, and we ſhall ioine with you neere about the time, wherof we will alſo giue you an infallible token. You ſhall vnderſtand, that within few dayes, we ſhall dye by the ſtroake of the ſword, for the faith of our gracious Redeemer, for which we infinitely thāck his diuine maieſty: exceedingly reioycing, that it hath pleaſed him to elect vs to be of the number of his Martyrs. But when we ſhall haue accōpliſhed our courſe, the Chriſtians of Marrocco ſhall bring our bodyes into this cittie, to the meeting wherof, you and your huſband ſhall come in great reuerence and ſolemnity. When then you ſhall ſee theſe thinges, hope and know that your terme ſhalbe expired, and that you ſhall ſhortly be through loue vnited with God, there to raigne eternally.

How the ſiue Martyrs arriving at Alenquer, the Infāta provided the ſhipping & other neceſſaries, to goe to Swill, and ſeculer habits, therby to paſſe vnknoꝝne among the Moꝛes, who otherwiſe would neuer haue permitted them to paſſe.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

THe ſiue Religious hauing taken leaue of the Queene, who gaue the letters of fauour & cōmendation vnto Alēquer whither they intēded their iorney, in which cittie there was already a Couēt of Frere Minors whome they viſited, where for certaine dayes they comforted one an other, in meane while they alſo bethought theſelues of cōmodious meanes to goe to Liſbone, diſtāt thece about eight leagues; in which time they were aduertised of a merchants ſhip, wherein they vnderſtood they might paſſe, by the fauour of the Infanta Sanctia, the daughter of Sancho ſecond king of Portugall; who reſided in the ſame cittie & there kept her Court, they preſented vnto her the leters of the foreſaid Queene, for whoſe ſake ſhe gaue them a gracious welcome, being one of the moſt pious & vertuous ladyes that all Chriſtendome did then afford, and had reieſted great matches, to conſerue her virginity, wherof ſhe made ſuch eſteeme, as ſhe deſired rather to be depriued of Paradife, the to haue her chaſtity violated. She was in deed, endued with all vertues, and liued in great abſtinence and faſting, wearing next her fleſh a haire cloth in ſteed of a ſmock, praying day and night, giuing and diſtributing her reuenues vnto the poore. She was a true mother vnto the poore, conſidering the affection wherwith ſhe releiued, comforted, and aſſiſted them. She then hauing heard related the
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admirable worckes of S. Francis, and his Brethren, when they were there, the year 1217. she called then vnto her, and built them a Couent without Alenquer, in a solitary place, against the riuer, by reason of whose ouerflowing, she admitted them into her Pallace, where she builded them a litle monasterie, as a place more healthfull, free from the inundations of the water, and more commodious for her. The pious Infanta then hauing vnderstood the holy and firme resolution of these said Religious, commended it exceedinglie, and for the time of their being there, entertained them very curteouslie, discoursing alwayes of spirituall matters. She gaue them secular habittes, that they might trauell the more commodiouslie; for otherwise they might haue bin entercepted in their passage, neither would the merchants haue admitted the into their vessels together with them in their habittes, if they had in any sort discouered their designe, for feare to offend the Mores, whose disfaour they would not haue encurred for any thing whatsoeuer, as people more respecting their profit then their honour or saluation, and more hungry of mony, then of the glory of God. Therefore then did they remayne some time in that citty, in meane while their haire did grow and encrease, so that their crownes or other distinctions could not be discerned from secular personnes: att length, commending their pious desire prompt obedience, and seruour of charity towards God and their neighbour, encouraging them also of her part, though needlesly, she sent them to Lisbon as worldlings and vnknowne, there to embarcke themselves for Seuill, hauing withall formerly furnished them with what was necessarie.

How the said Religious arriuing att Seuill, and hauing cast off their secular habitt, did preach to the Mores, and of the beginning of their tribulations.

THE V. CHAPTER.

THe good Religious, not without much trouble arriued att Seuill, where they disbarqued themselves. This citty was then possessed and vlrped by the Mores, they lodged in the house of a Cittizen, that was a Christian, rich, noble, and deuout, there they putt off their secular habitts, tooke their owne, and then for eight dayes together applyed theselues to fasting and seruent prayer, with teares begging day and night of almighty God, that he would please to asist and further them, that they might begin their enterprile to the glory of his diuine maiesty, to their owne, and those ruined foules saluation, and that he would giue them force to die for his holy faith. Now being deceaued
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by the exterior apparence of the deuotion of their Host, they plainlie discouered vnto him their full intention, presuming of his aduile therein: but they were much deceaued and amazed, for he repenting that he had lodged them, for feare both of himselfe and other Christian marchantes that liued there, began to endeauour to dissuade them, affirming that they would profit nothing; but would rather put themselues in extreme danger and manifest perill to loose their owne faith, by meanes of the terrible tormentes which would be inflicted on them. Which these good Religious vnderstanding, they instantlie, without giuing any aunswere or making him other reply, forsoke his house, and as couragious and valiant soldiers, went directly to giue the assault to the fortresse of the enemy, to witt, to the Temple of the Moors, where finding all their ennemies in armes, praying to their Prophet, they began to chARGE and strike them with the cutting sword of the word of God, preaching and praying the faith of IESVS. But the great multitude of ennemies seeing them in such base and straung kind of habitts, thrust them out with the pointes of their daggers and stroakes of cudgels, vsing them as fooles. This beginning of trouble redoubled the pious seruour of the good Religious, making them actiue and desirous to suffer much more for the name of IESVS CHRIST, wherefore they determined to seeke to enter into an other Temple greater then the former, and full of people, there to conuince and confound the Mahometan errour, and to preach the truth of the Christian faith: but they were not permitted to enter there, but were very rudely and with iniuries farre repulled. They enflamed with great zeale, to denounce & make knowne I. C. vnto these infidels, were nothing terrified, but to giue courage to themselues, said to each other: Brethren what doe we? lett vs remeber those wordes of our Lord I. C. Feare not, litle flock, for it hath pleased your Father to dispose vnto you his kingdome: therefore lett vs not desist to preach his holy faith. Wherefore doe we spend time with this simple and inconsiderat multitude of people, considering the litle hope we haue being so few, to suppress their obstinacie? lett vs rather repaire to their king, endeauouring first to conquer the head, so with more ease & facility to gett victory of the members afterward? Lett vs giue him the on sett couragiously and ioyfully: lett vs goe then, lett vs goe preach and tell him the verity, of the faith of IESVS CHRIST, of Baptisme, & of penance, in remission of sinnes. Lett vs boldly confesse before him that IESVS CHRIST the sonne of God is true God and man, who would be borne & dye for sinners, with his owne blood redeeming vs from eternal death, & rising againe after his death, ascended vnto heauen, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father, Iudge of the liuing & dead, where he expecteth vs to crowne vs with his holy martyrs for euer.

LUC. 12.

*How these five Religious preached before the king of the Moors, the
faith of Iesus Christ our Saviour, and
what succeeded thereof.*

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THese Religious being thus mutuallie animated, went directlie to the Pallace of the king, at the entrie wherof being intercepted by the guard, their Captaine who was a gentleman of note, demaunded of them what they were. They answered that they were Italiens, and desired to speake with his maiestie, of matters of great importance, as well touching his owne particular as his whole kingdome. Whereupon the Captaine demaunded if they had no letters or other token of commendations to deliuer him. They replied that their embassage was to be deliuered by mouth, and could not be writtē but in hartes, & by tongues. The Captaine willed thē securely to commend the affaire vnto him, promising to deliuer it faithfully vnto the king: they prayed him againe for conclusion to conduct them only to the presence of the king, where he might also vnderstand what they had to say: The Captaine related the whole vnto the king, who commanded them to be brought before him; where being present, he demaunded them what they were; whence they came; who sent thē vnto him: & wherefore they were come. Wherto they answered, that they were Christiāns: that they came frō Rome, sent frō the king of kinges, and Redeemer of the world, IESVS CHRIST, to preach vnto him his holy faith: so that their busines tēded only to the saluatiō of his soule: which should be effected if he would no longer beleue the doctrine of Mahomet, but in IESVS C. the true God, receauing baptisme in the name of the most sacred Trinity, & that he could not be saued by any other meane. The Mory king that expected no such greeting, became despightfully furious: for he esteemed the seruantes of God to haue giuen him an extreme affront, to whome he said: O ye poore braineles men, sottish and miserable as ye are; how can ye possibly presume to vtter this speech in my presence, without more respect vnto my crowne, or feare of the losse of your liues, already infallibly incurred, by the great blaphemie committed against my most holy Prophet; But tell me, are yee come hither expresly and in my only particular respect, or to preach also vnto my people, and to delude them, disuading them frō mine obedience and their alleagiance? Hereto the good Religious with a bold and smiling countenance answered: O king know that we are come to thee as to the cheife of all this sect of Mahomet, filled with diabolical spirit, and to him that in the bottome of hell shall be

be more rigorously tormented then thy subiectes that shall persist in obstinacie, to the end that thou being reduced into the way of truth & saluation, thou mayest be a meane of their conuersion, as thou art. now the cause of their damnatio; for auoyding wherof thou must beleue in IESVS CHRIST our Redeemer, who sendeth vs vnto thee, saying in the Gospell: Goe and teach ye all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father & of the Sonne, and of the Holy Ghost, & adding afterward for the that would not yeld therunto: he that will not beleue, shalbe damned eternally. This king stopping his eares, began to rage and crye out: O cursed wretches, your former lewd behauiour no doubt hath brought you hither, where it shalbe rewarded instantly; neither is there any other meane to deliuer & free your selues, but that you vnsway whatsoeuer you haue now foolishly and rashly vttered; and to receaue and espouse the Religion of our great Prophet; for, so doing, I will not only pardō you, but will also make you great and rich in my kingdome, that it may publikelie appeare how much we prize and esteeme the greatnes of our Prophet: and how much we honour, respect and enrich those that preferre our Religion before their owne: but otherwise, you shall for your follie dye with infinite torments, or I will enforce you to beleue me: The Religious replyed, if your law were not full of lies, false & impious, as it is, but iust and conformable vnto truth, we would receaue it, but because it doth eternallie damne the followers therof, we respect not all treasure, nor feare tormentes; for false honours are the baits and delusions of you Mores, who truly miserable, doe end together with them, because they haue no longer continuance, and you are eternallie damned: the meerlie contrarie happening to vs, considering that by the pouertie and contempt of our dayes of this life, we pouerchase eternall treasures and honours in heauen, as our Lord teacheth vs, when he said: Heap not vp your treasure in earth, where nothing is secure: but in heauen, where you may for euer enjoy the benefitt therof. And therefore O king, be thou conuerted to receaue this true and holie law, in regard of this recompence. And if thou so much esteeme a kingdome of this world, how much more oughtest thou to esteeme this eternall kingdome of heauē? rourne thy hart to the foueraigne and true God, who hath thus long expected thy penance, and now sendeth vs vnto thee, as his messengers to deliuer thee from the eternall tormentes of hell, which are prepared for thee and all them that follow the absolutely accursed Mahomet. Take heed how thou misprize the grace which God by meanes of vs doth offer vnto thee.

Matt. 23.

Matt. 6.

How the five Martyrs were adindged to death by the Morian king, who at the instance of the prince his sonne, reuoked his sentence.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe Morian king could no longer endure nor heare the preaching and remonstrance of the Religious against his sect; but being exceedingly afflicted and enraged, commanded them to be expelled his presence, and condemned them to be cruelly whipt, and then to haue their heades cutt off. The Martyrs then hastened to death, with a courage and countenance very ioyfull and contented, as they that knew themselues neere to the accomplishment of what they too much desired, and to encourage each other, they mutually said: Behold brethren, behold how God doth benignely offer vnto vs, that which we haue so long desired of him. We are att the port, lett vs seeke to arme vs well to endure this litle conflict; henceforward we shal no more feare the terrible tempestes of this world, nor the windes of the temptations of the deuill, nor the deceitfull singing of the alluring Mermaides of our flesh, the impious thenceforward shal haue no more power ouer this our feeble body, for we goe into a glorious country, to see againe our first originall, and to serue our Lord, whose seruice is to reigne: there shal we receaue recompense of our labours, after more then a hundred, more then the double, yea a thousand times more then we deserue. Lett vs now then giue praye to our God; enduring this litle for his loue: lett vs restore this life to him that hath redeemed it by his owne death. Vttering these good speeches, thy hastened to receaue the martyrdom at the place where they were to be executed, going before the executioner, who with some other officers of Iustice, seeing with what alacrity they hastened to their death, began to haue compassion on them as of poore foolish personnes, and therefore exhorted them to reflect on their owne case, with these or the like wordes; Doe yee not consider your owne misery, thus reioycing, being so neere the losse both of this life and the other? deny that which you haue vnadvisedly and impiously, or att least temerariouly vttered against our law, and against the person of our king; and to this effect we will seeke to obtaine your fauour, and to enrich you with temporal substance, and our Prophett Mahomett, who is very mercifull, will pardon you, and benefitt you in the other life. The Religious herevnto answered: your richesse, delicacies, allurementes of this world, are as false and deceitfull as your law and your promises: and therefore lett them be your portion that giue credit to such delusions. For our parts, we beleue nothing more certaine and glorious, then to endure for
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the truth and the name of IESVS CHRIST, sith that only is the secure way to eternall life. Therefore doe we so ioyfully contemne the present life with all the wealth therof; considering with all that it is but a puffe in comparison of eternity. And the false Prophet whome you honour being in hell, can neither obtaine mercy for himselfe, nor for any others. There did accompany them certaine Christians, who much feared, that the extremity of the tormentes might enforce them to renounce their Faith. The sonne of the said king of Seuil who was present with his Father when he gaue sentence against the holy Religious, perceauing his fury to be somewhat appeased, said vnto him: Vpon what reason, Father, haue you so lightlie giuen order for the death of these men? It were not amisse (vnder correction of your better aduise) that you commanded our Preistes to be called, that they may conuince the impious Christians, as well by naturall reasons, as by aucthority of the law: for mine opinion is, that proceeding otherwise, you putt them to death vniustly euen according to our owne lawes. The king weighing what his sonne had said, and a litle moderating himselfe, commaunded that they should not be executed, but should be imprisoned in an high and strong toure, till it were more maturely concluded what should be done against them.

How the Martyrs preached thorough the batlements of the toure where they were prisoners, and therefore were shutt vp into a deep dungeon: then presented to the king, and att last by aduise of the Counsaile, sent to Maroccho.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THe Martyrs by this reuocation, felt in their hartes a double martyrdom, fearing that God would withdraw from them his grace of suffering for him, by reason of some imperfection which he saw in them: neuertheles entirely yielding themselves into his handes, they resolved on their part to performe their due obedience of preaching, what soeuer issue it should please his diuine Maiestie to worck therof: and to this effect, they mounted to the toppe of the tower, and out att the batlements they preached vnto the Mores that passed by, with a loud voice crying vnto them: Poore blinded people, belecue in the true God and Lord IESVS CHRIST, and abandon the superstition and impietie of your vnfortunate Mahomett: otherwise your law, and all you shal be eternally damned. Now is the time of penance: God sendeth vs

to visitt you, receaue his word of sufficiencie to saue your soules: forbear to lend any more your eare to the diuill and to his illusions, if you wil not be eternally tormented in hell. Such and like matters did these holy Martyrs preach: wherof the king was incontinentlie aduertised, who commaunded them to be thrust downe into a deep dungeon, where they persisted in continuall prayer, the space of fise entire dayes preaching also to the other prisoners. After that, the king caused them to be brought before him, supposing they had bin reclaymed and repentant: thefore desirous to gaine them by menaces, terrours, promises and mercie, to allure them to his sect, he said: O yee sortish and blinded, haue you not as yet acknowledged and abiured your error? Doe no longer abuse my clemencie, who haue so long expected your repentnace, as also my holy Prophett, who, though you haue blaphemed him, is so gracious, as he will not faile to pray to God for you. Now I ordaine and att this present pronounce, as a finall sentence, either death by the most cruell tormentes that without any delay can be inuented: or my grace with all the honours and richesse that my best fauourites enioy. The glorious Martyrs verie constantly answered him, as they had att other times affirmed, that they nothing respected honours and temporall richesse, and much lesse those tormentes, nor death it selfe; and therefore would yeld themselues to be disposed att his pleasure, considering that their bodies and soules were so firmly grounded in the loue of their Redeemer I E S V S C H R I S T, that euery hower which they expected to meet him in Paradice, seemed to them a thousand yeares, knowing that there they should liue eternally, without feare euer to be separated: then they added: Our God is the soueraine good, and not your Mahomett, for whome, as also for all his adherentes, are prepared eternall tormentes, which they already experience, as you shall one day, if you be not conuerted, yea without hope euer to gett out of hell, where you shall call and crye, but none shall answer you. There shall you repent in vaine, that you followed not our Counsaile which God sendeth you: there shall you be in horror, greife, sorrow and eternall dispaire which God hath prepared for them, whome att the terrible day of iudgemēt, he shall find to haue bin contrary to the true faith of his Sonne I E S V S C H R I S T, true God, and true man, there to liue in perpetuall tormentes, as they who are his, shall liue in perpetuall ioy. Then O king, thou shalt not escape his handes, though thou seeme now to haue some power, which is a singuler benefitt bestowed on thee by God, to see and expect if thou wilt be conuerted vnto him; and happy art thou if thou canst acknowledge it. The king already experiencing the force of the holy Ghost that spake in his seruantes, remayned vtterly perplexed: Neuertheles

theles retourning them to prison, he commaunded that they should be loaden with irons, and that bread should be giuen them by the ounce, and water by measure. They remayned certaine dayes in this pittifull estate, in meane while neuertheles, he aduised with his Galociers and Counsaillers of estate, what was conuenient to be done with them. Some of them gaue their opinion, that it was not expedient to doe them any hurt, because, said they, they are francike and senceles, as may be iudged by their foolish and sottish discourfes, so rashly and indiscreetly vttered. Others answered the king, that it was not fitt for him to embroe his handes in such base blood, but better that he retourned them from whence they came to which purpose there was fit commodity of a shippe prepared for Marroccho, where there were many Christians. The king admitted this Counsaile, and sent them away in the said shipping.

How the Martyrs arriued att Marroccho where they preached, and being thence expulsed they retourned againe.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

THe Religious being arriued att Marroccho, in company of a Spanishe knight called Peter Ferdinando of Castro Castellan, who was then retired and dwelt in Africa, in the Court of Miramolink king of Maroccho, by reason of some disagreement which he had in Caltile: this man conducted them to the Pallace of the Prince of Portugall, Dom Pedro brother to king Alphonfus, that then reigned, who vpon certaine wronges and iniuries receaued of the said king his brother, was likewise retired vnto the said king Miramolin: he entertained them with much contentment, furnishing them with all necessities, being much amazed to see them in a habitt so course, scantie, and short: their face so wanne, and their other partes so thinne, that their skinn seemed to be sowed to their bones, their eyes hollowed, and their shoulders croked and bended by the wearisomnes of their painefull life, and mortification of their flesh; and notwithstanding there appeared in their countenance so gracious a vertue, and such a seruour and ioy of spirit, that they seemed in deed Angels of Paradice, exteriorly dead, but liuing and burning in such sort interiorly with the loue of God, that they esteemed death but as a play, and sought it as a pretious and wisfull thing, burning with charity towards their neighbour, and most zealous of their saluation. Which the said Prince hauing well considered, as also the affliction which he vnderstood they had endured att Seuil, to

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pourchace the crowne of martyrdome, fearing that by attempting the like there, they might trouble the whole Realme, he laboured by many pregnant and probable reasons to dissuade & diuert them frō their pious intention; but these glorious Religious, already martyres in will, perceauing the intention of the Prince, very early the next morning without saying any thing vnto him, went out, and settled themselues where they saw most Sarrazins, to preach boldly vnto them the faith of I E S V S C H R I S T: and being afterward informed that their king was gone to visit the sepulchres of the kinges neere the citty, and was incontīnētly to retourne, and vnderstanding which way he was to passe, they wēt out of the citty to meet him, where they made choise of a place somewhat high whither they ascended to be better heard: Brother Berard, who had better knowledge of the Arabian tongue then the rest, when he saw the king to approach, began with a loud voice to preach vnto him the Catholique faith, and what one must belieue to be saued, telling him that it was necessarie for him to abandon and adiure the sect of Mahomett. The king exceedingly admired to perceauē the confidence wherwith so poore a man did speake: and with other of his followers endeauoured to putt him to silence, but failing therein, and therefore repūting them for fooles, he commaunded them to be retyred to the land of the Christians. The said Prince of Castile himselfe sent two of his people after them to accompany them euen to Cepte, and there to further their imbarcking for Portugall, to preuent that they should not be abused: but they conninglie escaped those Conductors, and returned to Maroccho where they preached in a publike place inducing the people to renounce the law of Mahomett. Which the king vnderstanding, he caused them to be cast into a deepe dungeon, and forbad to be giuen them either meat or drinck: in this manner did they continue twentie dayes: in which time they were releiued onlie with diuine grace: in the meane time there befell such an intemperate heat of the sunne beating vpon Maroccho, that it brought the people euen neere to death; the Mores therefore fearing that it was a diuine vengeance, made meanes to the king by a man of worth that loued the Christians, and was in fauour with his maiesty, to release out of prison those poore bare-foote Creatures, and to committ them to the Christians, who should haue chardge to banish them out of his kingdome. The king called the Religious before him: but he was exceedingly amazed to see them, after a supernaturall and monstrous fast, so faire, so gracious, so fresh and well disposed as they were; and therefore he demaunded of Brother Berard, who had giuen them to eat. Wherto he bouldly answered, that if he would become Christian, he should know the omnipotent power of God, and how he relieueth and nourisheth his seruants in this life, who-

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*The five
Martyrs
were 20.
dayes
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me he conserueth alwayes to recompence them eternallie in heauē. The king made no replie, but onlie caused them to be deliuered to the Christians for the end aforesaid, who shutt them into a house, and afterward sent them in secure guard and companie (as they thought) to haue them embarqued at Cepte, vpon the first occasion of shipping for Spaine: But they gaue the slippe to their keepers, and retourned to Maroccho as before; which the aforesaid Prince hauing vnderstood, he caused them to be apprehended, shutt vp and strongly guarded in his owne pallace, for feare that by their meanes the Christians of Maroccho and himselfe also, might receaue some trouble and disaster.

Of a notable miracle wrought by the five Martyrs in the army of the kinge.

THE X. CHAPTER.

THe king Miramolin att that time was aduertised that the Arabians were entred into his kingdome, where they made hauock and destroyed the whole country: Vpon which occasion he gathered his forces to encounter them: and by the helpe of the said Prince, and of manie gallant Portugall gentlemen, which he had with him, he defeated the Arabians, whom he chased far away, and so pursuing them, they came into a valley where they could finde no water either for themselves or their horses: so that for three dayes they knew not what to doe, being neere death with thirst. And because the earth seemed to be somewhat moist, they licked it with their tongues: comming to the hight of a mountaine, they burned and became outrageous with thirst without any redresse, and yet greater was their dispaire when they found the widenes of the Country to be of greater extent then that which they had passed in drinesse: but considering that when they should retourne, they should all dye with thirst before they should finde water, they knew not way to take. Now the said five Religious, hauing by the prouidence of God againe deceaued their keepers, came to the Camp which they found in despaire, where perceauing the cruell thirst that afflicted the army, they publikely with a verie strong confidence which they had in the diuine maiesty, offered to procure vnto the Mores as much water as they should need, on condition they would be conuerted vnto the faith of IESVS CHRIST, assuring them that if they would be Baptised with the water of baptisme, they should not want waterto drinck. This proposition comming to the eares of the king; he said this drinesse befell them vpon no other occasion, but for neglecting the punishment of the great blasphemies of the said Religious, against his great Prophett Mahomett. These good Religious seeing the obdurate hartes of the king

*The fine
Religious
obtained
of God
Water in
an ex-
treme
necessity.*

and his people, to make knowne the omnipotencie of IESVS CHRIST, and the truth of the Catholike faith which they preached, resolving not to loose the occasion presented to manifest the glory of God, for the saluation of the soules of those people, applying themselves to prayer, Brother Berard tooke a staffe, and therewith made a litle hole in the earth, whence issued out water most abundantlie and sufficiently to alay the thirst, not only of the men but of all the horses and camels of the army of Miramolin, yea they receaued therof and made prouision for the dayes following: which done, the said fountaine incontinentlie dried vp. This gaue so generall an applause, and the Christians and very Mores were so edified therby, that they desirouslie sought to kisse their habittes, and to honour them as saintes of God, only the king persisted obdurate, as an other Pharao, and a Preist of the Mores, that among them was reputed for a S. who often disputed with the said Religious, and particularly against Brother Berard, and because he was ordinarily vanquished, but especially by reason of this said miracle, he full of greife and affliction fled, and was netier after seene amongst the Mores in that country. The prince sent the said Religious againe into his Pallace vnder strict guard, for feare least if they should preach, they might more scandalize the king.

How the fine Martyrs retourned againe twice to preach to the Mores, for which the king deliuered them ouer vnto Iustice.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

They that had charge of the said Religious, being Christians, did so reuerence them, that they could in no sort enforce them nor carry too watchful an eye ouer them, by which meanes they escaped as formerly they had done. This being vpon a friday when the king according to his custome was gone to visit the sepulchers of his predecessours, they vsed meanes that he might heare their predication at his retourne, as once before they had done, which they enterprised: but the king so disdayned it, that he caused them incontinentlie to be apprehended, and in extreme choler commanded a noble man of the Mores called Abolaide, one of the principall of his Court, first to torture them, and then to putt them to death: but it succeeded otherwise, for this noble More was present at the miracle which these Religious SS. wrought in the army when they satisfied it with water, and so out of deuotion and compulsion which he had of them, he was content not to medle with them from noone vntill night, notwithstanding the expresse comaund giuen him by the king, whome he presumed might be appealed

appeased and pacified by the frequent and humble petitions which the Christian noble men and gentlemen would present vnto him. But they perceauing how much the king was incensed against them, for the iniury which he pretended those Religious had so often reiterated vpon him, they all quietly retyred into their houses, where they carefully kept themselves close, not daring to appeare, for feare least they might freele the effectes of the choler of the king; wherof in deed there was apparent reason: for withall, the Mores were so enraged against the Christians, that they had a will to massacre them all, in reuenge of the iniury done to their sect and to their Prophett Mahomett. Att night the said noble man conuented before him the Religious, who came to his lodgeing very ioyfull, all maniced and enchained. But were it vpon necessary and vrgent affaire that he had, or would he take occasion to deferre their condemnation, he was not then at home; wherfore they were deliuered to an Apostata More of our Religion, that had renounced Christianity, to be carefully guarded; and very early in the next morning, they brought them againe to the lodgeing of the said noble man, whome neither then did they finde, for they vnderstood that he was out of the city and the king also, and would not vere speedily retourne; they then committed the sainctes to prison vnder strong guard, who, albeit they were enchained, beaten, and exceedinglie tormented, had neuertheles their speech alwayes free, which they spared not to employ for the conuersion vnto IESVS CHRIST, of those that so strictly kept and rudely entreated them, who in disdaine therof, gaue them sound buffettes spert in their faces, and abused them most outragiouslye. All this did not hinder these good Religious from preaching both to them and their other fellow prisoners, where they remayned certaine dayes in very extreme want of food and all other necesities: but afterward the Christians prouided them whatsoeuer was needfull, in the most secrete manner they could; and att length dealt so effectually, and so gained those that had chardge of them, that they condescended to permitt them to depart, on condition they should be securelie conducted euen into Spaine: for the said Christians feared and suspected the hatred the king did carry them, by occasion of these said Religious, who deceauing their keepers as before, escaped from the place they lodged the first night out of Maroccho, and the next morning were seene againe att a publique place preaching constantlye the faich of IESVS C. aduertising the Mores, that if they did desire to discarde themselves from the sottish delusions of Mahomett, and free themselves frō hell, they must necessarily be baptised. The Mores theū furiously on the SS, did beat & abuse the despirefully & with tumult

and exclamation; but these true Religious endured this affront; like courageous and invincible lions. Then after infinite iniuries and beatings, these simple and innocent sheep of IESVS CHRIST were led to the lodging of the gouernour, in most ignominious manner: for they most rudely threw them to the ground, trayned and trampled on them, as if they had bin brute beastes.

How the five Martyrs preached to the Gouvernour of Maroccho.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

THe couragious Seruantes of IESVS CHRIST, being presented before the parlemental seate of the Mores, with their handes manicled behinde their backs, all bloody and embrued with the blowes giuen them by the people; the cheife president made them this demaund: Obstinate men, and temerariours ennemies of our faith, whence are you? whence come ye? what is your designe? whence proceedeth such a presumption thus to blasphemie our great Prophet? The SS. answered that they were by nation Italians, and came from Portugal: but, said the president, who permitted you to enter into this kingdom, so presumptuously and boldly heere to preach a new doctrine contrary to the faith of the Mores? Brother Otto a Priest, constantly answered, that as for their preaching, it came from God, who is to be obeyed rather then men, because, said they, our Lord IESVS CHRIST is the Creatour, Redeemer, and soueraigne master, to whome whatsoever is in the world is subiect, and none is able to resist his holie will, he hath left vs this commandement, that we should vniuersally preach his holy gospell, therefore are we come to preach to your king and to your selues, to denounce vnto you the wordes of life, that being illuminated with diuine grace, you may discerne in what error you are, to come afterward to the true way of saluation, as we shall demonstrate vnto you, if you please to giue vs audience. Besides we are sent hither by our Generall, Brother Francis, who as well by himselfe as by his Religious, trauelleth ouer all the world to preach vnto Infidels (by an exceeding loue and desire of the saluation of soules that induceth him) the true way of faith, notwithstanding you carry vs so great an hatred. The president answered, you poore blinded & ignorant wretches, deceaued as ye are, to esteeme them for vtterly lost that follow not your doctrine, but tell me a litle, what is that truth which you haue found, and whither it be possible that there may be an other way of saluation then what we profess. Brother Otto replenished with the holy Ghost replied: IESVS CHRIST is the
soueraigne

foueraine verity, and the true and only way that can conduct to the port
 of saluation, by meane of his holy faith: which consisteth in belieuing
 him to be God and man, God three and one, Father, Sonne, and Holy
 Ghost: and true man borne of the Virgin Mary, Creatour of all this
 frame of the world, true man conioyned to the diuinity, and Redeemer
 of all the men in the world, that were already lost and condemned
 by the sinne of Adam, in which humanity he conuersed with all, he
 instructed all, and saued all those that would belieue in him both then,
 att this present, and euen till the day of the last iudgement, he suffered
 death and passion to pay by his precious bloud, our proper and par-
 ticuler faultes, and incontinentlie after arose againe to conduct vs all
 also to heauen: whence he shall come hereafter to iudge on earth the
 liuing and dead: he shall then come in his maiestie, where neither hu-
 mane forces, nor richesse, nor kingdomes, nor Empires shall in any
 sort preuaile; man being obliged to stand naked and alone, accompa-
 nyed only with his workes, good or euill, according to which he shall
 iudge him, giuing to his SS. eternall glory in heauen; and to others that
 would not belieue in him, eternall fire in hell. The President smiling
 said: And how know you these thinges to be so certaine as you auouch
 them? Brother Otto answered: By the testimony of the holy scriptu-
 res dictated by the holie Ghost, which haue reuealed vnto vs this ve-
 rity, by testimonie I say of the Patriarches and Prophets of the old tes-
 tament, as also by the doctrine and testimony of our Redeemer IESVS,
 who is the way, out of which there is none att all: the truth, out of
 which is nothing but deceit: and the life, out of which is only death;
 likewise by the predication of his holy Apostles, confirmed by manie
 great miracles, which propheties for the most part are fulfilled, and only
 remaine those that are for the end and consummation of the world: in
 such sort as we ought also to belieue their doctrine, and with greater
 reason and foundation then you haue for your superstition, considering
 that you belieue only vpon the writing of your false prophet Mahomet
 which is not assured or confirmed by any testimony more then his sim-
 ple deceitfull and lying word: and we besides the said confirmations
 and accomplishmentes of matters foretold by our Prophetes, haue in-
 finite miracles wrought by our Sauour IESVS CHRIST, and
 his holie Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours, and Virgins, that giue vs
 prooffe of the holy, yea most holie and most assured faith; for we
 haue seene to be cured an infinite number of diseased personnes, infi-
 nite possessed creatures deliuered, the necessarie vse of members restored
 to the maymed, the blind illuminated, hearing and speech restored to
 infinite deafe and dumme, leapers cleansed and purified, and finally the
 dead already putrified to be raised, which you cannot auouch of your false

Mahomett; therefore reiecting this vaine and abhominable beleife, embrace ours, approued by so many tokens and testimonies diuine and humane: flye this manifest illusion, take from before your eyes this false cloud, that obscureth them, only by reason that you are borne in such an accursed law, and nusled therein; for beleue that as soone as you shall begin to giue place in your hart to the holy Ghost, you shall interiourly feele such a light and force, that you will after doe more of your selues, then we can by wordes expresse; and by your example you shall open then gate of saluation to the simple people. Take knowledge therefore with me, I beseech you, how your miserable prophett leadeth you together with himselfe to eternall damnation, by meanes of many of his falsities and sinnes, that he hath taught you, which are out of the true and only way of saluation. And if you desire to saue your soules, you must necessarily follow the true light of life, which is ready to illuminate each one, and resist no longer the holy Ghost that calleth you to his kingdome.

Of the constancy of the five Martyrs in their tormentes, and how they were visited in prison by our Lord.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

BVt the President hearing this notable discourse, and fearing the people might be conuerted by such pregnant reasons, filled with a zeale towards his owne law, proposed vnto the holy Martyrs one of these two elections, either that they should yeld honour and glory to his Prophett, for the blasphemies they had vttered against him, and should freely preach his law: or els should prepare themselves to endure such cruell tormentes, as should enforce their death. Wherto Brother Otho, replenished with exceeding ioy for the desired aduertisement they heard of Martyrdome, answered: if feare of death would terrify vs, we should perhaps aduise to admitt your law, as many miserable wretches, that for feare to loose this transitory life loose the eternall. But our Redeemer hath strengthened and fortified vs against that pusillanimity, when he willed vs, not to feare those that haue power only to torment this wretched, vile and fraile body, but him that can torment both our body and soule eternally in hell: Therefore, for as much also as we know that he only shalbe crowned, who shall constantly perseuer to the end, doe what you will: for we hope in the diuine Maiesty, that your executioners shalbe rather be weary of tormenting vs, then we of ioyfully enduring for the loue of God; considering withall that we repure this death.

Matt. 10.

Luc. 21.

& 2.

Tim. 2.

death receaued for IESVS CHRIST, as the gate of life, wherby we are
 to enter. This iudge seeing their constancy comanded them to be sepa-
 rated and committed to seuerall places, and cruelly whipt, and that after
 the executioners were wearied, there should salt be put and vinegar po-
 wred in to their woundes, and lastly shutt vp in prison, all which was
 done: and the next morning he caused the same to be iterated, and then
 he sent the to a publicke place vnto the people, that they might be reuē-
 ged on them for the iniuries committed against Mahomett. They were
 brought thither naked, their handes bound behinde their backes, and
 cordes about their neckes: there, were their woundes renewed and their
 passed afflictions redoubled: for besides that they were cruelly beaten &
 scourged, they cast them vpon broaken glasse and sharp pointed flintes: *Cruelties*
 wheron they roled and tumbled the: afterward they cast boylling oyle *of the*
 on their bodyes, omitting nothing that might exulcerate their woun- *Maho-*
 des: each of them esteeming it a great sacrifice vnto Mahomett, to exer- *metans*
 cise most barbarous and beastly kindes of tortures, or to inuent them for *upon the*
 discharge of their fury against the holy Martyrs, who not withstanding, *s. Mar-*
 in the midst of the said afflictions did with a loud voice praise and cō- *tyrs.*
 fesse our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, demonstrating that they respected
 not the tormētes which they endured nor the iniuries disgorged against
 the: for one cannot imagine that beastly, dishonest and infamous wordes
 which were not then vttered vnto them; but the most insupportable
 vnto them, were the blasphemies which they vsed against God. The
 whole day and part of the night, was spent in this pittifull spectacle, the
 were they retourned to prison, wher with all their hartes they gaue thāc-
 kes vnto God, and encouraged each other. Now the immensue and in-
 finite bounty beholding from heauen his holy seruantes, voutlased to
 giue them a farther consolation with his visible presence, appearing vn-
 to them in a most resplendent light, wherin they found an inestimable
 sweetnes and such, as they vtterly forgott whatsoeuer they had suffered
 and endured. This light so spred it selfe, that it was also seene of the
 keepers, who therin seeing many shadoes of personnes were fearfull, &
 suspected the prisoners were escaped therwith. And therefore they ha-
 stened to a prisoner that was a good Christian called Peter Hermand, to
 whome they related that they had seene the holy Martyrs escape and
 ascend vnto heauen in a bright and cleare light. He coniecturing, that
 this might be some notable vision seene by them, did comfort them: &
 bid them not to feare, affirming that he had heard them all the night to
 sing & praise God; which they being desirours to proue, as seeming pro-
 bable, they went and found them all in prayer very ioyfull and content
 in their prison, as if they had not endured any affliction.

How they were presented before the king Miramolin, Whome they putt to silence and confounded.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

THe next morning, the king retourning from the fieldes, and vnderstanding what had passed touching the Religious, he resolved to see the end of their proceeding, and either to conuert them to the law of Mahomett, or els to haue a most cruell reuenge vpon them. Which the foresaid Prince of Portugall Dom Pedro perceauing, repayred to the said President, and prayed him that after the said Religious should be dead, their bodies might not be committed to the disposition of the Mores, but of the Christians: which he obtayned. The said Martyrs were then brought before the king, their handes manncled behinde their backs, their face swollen, blew, buffeted, rent and all bloody as was all the rest of their body, with the blowes of the day precedent, seeming rather dead then liuing creatures: the king then beholding them with fauourable eye, said: Well, you now being in my presence, whither do you rather desirer to be mine enemies and rebelles, and as such cruelly to dye; or my freindes, and as such aduanced to the principall degrees of my kingdome? The holy Martyrs answered, that he might well hold them for his good freindes, sith they were come from so farre a contry only for his cause, and for the loue of him and of his kingdome, to saue them from perishing and going to hell eternally damned, putting their liues in hazard for the saluation of their soules and bodies. The king, vpon these wordes, considering the resolution and inuincible fortitude of the holy Martyrs, was vnterly confounded in himselfe: wherfore as extremely enraged he retired into his closett to consult what to doe with them, sith he could draw them to nothing either by sweetnes or extremity: the holy Martyrs on the contrary praising God for that he had giuen them grace euer till then to preach his holy faith, notwithstanding the buffets they had receaued to putt them to silence.

Of a conference betweene the said Religious, and a noble man of the Mores.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THere was a warlike noble More, desirous to attempt if he could by faire meanes and speeches gaine them: but he no more preuailed then the others; for he endeauoured by sweet wordes

to

to perswade them to obey the kinge, who was more carefull of their good then them selues, considering that being in his power to torment them and prolong their tortutres in deferring their death, he neuertheles endeauoured to make them see their errorrs, notwithstanding the iniuries he had receaued of them, and their great blasphemies vttered against his great prophett Mahomett; who all men know how gratefull he is to God, sith with his owne mouth he hath dictated vnto him his holy law, wherein if they would liue, he would in behalfe of the king promise them they should be most aduanced in his kingdome, and should euer rule and gouerne in this world, expecting, by the intercession of their great Prophett Mahomett, a double crowne of God after their death. Whereto Brother Otho with a zealous seruour answered: *Vade retro Sathana*, auant from my presence thou hideous and infernall deuill: for we, with a firme and liuely faith adore, and plainly confesse, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost, God in Trinity and vnity: but thou miserable wretch, that art already condemned to the eternall fire, where he is whome thou adorest, hauing compalsion of thy selfe, and performing thy duety, oughtest to be conuerted, it were more necessary for thee to shew they selfe more respectiue of thy owne saluation then of ours: we hauing made choice of this assured way the more readily to attaine the eternall kingdome. And hauing spoken this, touched with a iust and zealous disdaine, spelt twice vpon the ground in token that he abhorred the Mores proposition: which the More tooke so offenciue-ly, that in extreme fury, he would willingly haue drawn his sword to haue slaine him, but that it was dearth to draw a weapon in the kinges house; and therefore he only gaue him a sound buffett, saying: goe sir master and learne to gouerne your tongue an other time. This good Religious then as a true disciple of IESVS CHRIST, incontinently answered: Brother God pardon you: for you know not what you doe: then tuurning his face, he offered him the other cheeke, bidding him strike as rudely as he would, being as ready to endure both that and more for the faith of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST. The More not well hearing this reply, was exceedingly amazed when he was aduertised therof and touning towards his owne people, he said: These lewd Christians shall not escape the iustice of our king, which this day shall sharply be inflicted on them: But these miserable wretches vnderstood not that kinde of reuenge, knowne only to a few of the true seruantes of God.

How the king attempted againe to stagger and corrupt the holy Martyrs by promises.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

THe king in the meane time resolved to assault them with a new temptation, wherby presuming to preuaile, he reasoned with them in this manner: you would repute your selues truely and really happy, if you knew the grace which God and our great prophet offereth you, in that they so pacifie my courage as I cannot reuenge me on you in such sort as your offences and demerites require; but on the contrary, in steed of punishing you, I seeke by all meanes to gratifie you. Herevpon the king freed his chamber of all the company but some few fauourites, and caused to enter fise faire and yong gentlewomen richely attired, then said to the fise Martyrs: Note well what is in my clemencie: I know well, that your extreme pouerty and misery, such as your habittes doe demonstrate, hath troubled your braine: but I hope by curtesie and my merce liberality to cure you, for I will espouse you to these gentlewomen, with whome I will giue a rich dowrye, besides the portion of their parentes, who are the greatest Peeres of my kingdome, and whose substance you shall enherit, vpon this only condition, that you accept of our Religion, which so many kingdomes and great personages doe embrace. The holy Martyrs stopped their eares against these deluding promises made by this subtrill and creaky tyrann, whome they freely answered: O accursed of God, assure thy selfe these thy delightes will shortly conduct thee to the goulse of hell, in the bottome wherof thy false messenger of God Mahomet attendeth thee: to the end that as thou obeyest him in his law, thou eternallie accompany him in tormentes: And because thou art great in this world, thou shalt also be greatly tormented, and so much aboue others as thou hast more pleasure then they in this miserable life. Ah wretched and miserable ! acknowledge the error which thou so obstinatlie maintayneest. As for vs by the grace of God, we know well how to fly these false and transitorie pleasures, hereafter to enioy those that are reall and eternall in the glorie of God, which also we offer vn-to thee in his behalfe with remission of all thy sinnes: for our mercifull Lord I E S V S C H R I S T, dyed as much for thee on the tree of the crosse, as for vs. And if thou wilt not be ingratefull towards his diuine maiestie, acknowledge his graces and repent thee of this filthy life thou ledest, which hath bin taught, by thy false Prophet, to thee and thine, whome he leaderh as
brute

beastes by the nose of the sences after these carnall pleasures, instead and recompense wherof thou shalt eternallie burne in hell. The king by this answere perceaued well, that his fauourable wordes ayayled no more then his promises. Wherefore as halfe enraged with fury for the iniuries vttered against his Prophett and himselfe: sith, said he, you will not conceaue your owne good, I will make you proue what it is to offend the deity of our great Prophett, and the maiesty of a croune, for my selfe will reuenge the same with my owne handes for him and me: which said he prepared himselfe to play the executioner.

*How the holy Martyrs were beheaded by the very hand of the king
Miramolin, and how they appeared to the Infanta
Madam Sanctia.*

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

BVt the beloued saintes of our Lord, neuer in all their life heard more welcome newes: And therefore exceedingly ioyfull and content, and replenished with an admirable consolation, as knowing themselves to be neere their so desired recompence, they with a great vehemence and seruour answered in this sort: O king, our bodies only are in thy power, and therein consisteth the greatest hurt thou canst doe vs, which also redoundeth to our exceeding good with God: therefore dispose of them att thy pleasure, for our glory shall be so much greater in heauen, where his diuine maiesty prepareth vs his crowne in regard that we dye for his holy faith, in zeale whereof we againe admonish thee, and in as much as the saluation of thy soule is precious vnto thee, doe pray thee to leaue thy errours, wherein the diuell hath drowned thee, and to embrace the faith of the liuing God and of his only sonne I E S V S C H R I S T, who seeketh to saue thee: because this flesh which thou so much tenderest, shall shortly be food for wormes, and thy miserable soule, shall feeble the cruell and eternall paines which the damned endure in hell. The king heard not the end of this discourse: but commanded them to be conducted to a place before his palace, that there he might execute them himselfe: and that thereby the zeale he had to the law of Mahomet might publikely appeare, after that he walked thither with his people, where taking his great hanger, he separated them, then cryed out: I am now to reuenge the cause of our holy Prophett, and the derisions of our law, with myne owne handes: which said, full of diabolically fury, he gaue to each of the Martyrs a blow on the midst of the head, which cleaued it euen almost to the chinne, then he pleased himselfe in cutting their throates glutting his

1220.

fury by the sight of their blood. So being deuoutlie on their knees, praying God to pardon their persecutors, they by the handes of this great executioner, yelded their soules vnto God, the yeare of grace 1220. and the fourth yeare of the Papacie of Pope Honorius the third, the sixt of January, somewhat lesse then seauen yeares before the death of the glorious Father S. Francis. These were the first of his Order which he lent vnto heauen. Att the same time, the fise Martyrs appeared to the foresaid Infanta in the citty of Alenquer, about eleuen of the clock in the forenoone, she being very deuoutlie praying in her chamber. They had in their handes each of them a hanger in token of triumph, and spake to her in these wordes: God preferue thee, O true seruant of I E S V S CHRIST: for so much as thou hast encouraged vs, and as it were sent vs to this our glorious victory, it hath pleased the diuine maieltie to haue vs appeare vnto thee in the same manner that we triumphed, to promise thee that in acknowledgement of what thou hast done for vs, we shall henceforward be thy Aduocates in heauen. Which said, they disappeared, leauing the Infanta exceedingly comforted and contented, yea more then euer encouraged in the seruice of her sweet IESVS. In short time after she caused a Church to be builded in the place where the martyrs appeared vnto her, that thenceforward that house might serue only for the praise of God.

How the bodies of the fise martyrs were dismembred by the Mores, and how the Christians recovered them and preserved them from the fire, that could not annoy them, and of the miracle which God wrought when the Mores cutting them in pieces thought vtterly to dissipat and annihilat them.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

THe bodies and heades of the holy Martyrs remayned in prey to the people, who reioyced to see them all murdered, and tooke pleasure to rent and traine them through the citty, omitting no kind of inhumanity that might be imagined, to be exercised on their poore bodies: they tossed their heades from one to an other, as if they had bin balles or balloones: the Christians in the meane time prayed God, for the constancie which the martyrs had, & with loud voice thancked him for the same: others endeaoured to preferue or att least with their eyes to follow their reliques: which the Mores perceauing, they began so rudely to driue them away by casting stones, that it might be attributed to a miracle graunted in fauour of the saintes, that the Christians could escape without detriment into their lodgeing, where they

they were enforced to hide and keep themselves close and secrett, during three dayes which the fury of this enraged people continued, who of themselves would needs make a new massacre of them. These Infidels more wearyed then gluttied with tormenting the saintes bodies, cast them among the filthy ordure of the towne-sincke, whither the prince of Portugall aforesaid sent his Cousin Syr Martin Alphonfus Theglio, and the aforesaid Cheualier Peter Ferdinando de Castro, Castillan, to fetch them away: but they yelded their soules vnto their Sauour and Lord IESVS CHRIST, in this seruice so gratefull vnto him and to his saintes: for they were slaine by the Mores that kept the bodies; which not satisfying them, they gott permission of the king, to burne them publicly altogether, and to this effect, they made a pile of wood, and thereon layd the bodies and heades: but the fire being applyed therto, could in no sort offend them, but retired to one side without touching them: Which many Christian Prisoners (that aduentured to be present) did testifie, and certaines Mores that were friendes to the Christians, also recounted the same as matter of admiration to the said Prince of Portugall. The same may euen to this day be iustified by a head that is extant att S. Crosse of Conimbria, the haire whereof were neuer touched by the fire. But the rage of this barbarous nation not only was not qualified by this so euident miracle, but was rather encreased: Wherefore heaving these holy reliques into small morcels, they thought to reduce the to nothing, saying: Thus are the blasphemers and ennemies of our holy law chastised. But the diuine vengeance, which by extremity recompengeth tolleration, sodenlie sent from heauen such an vnexpected tempest and storme of haile, accompanied with very frequent lightnings & thunderclappes, furious windes, and vehement rayne; that the vtter ruine of the citty seemed to be imminent, so that the feare & terrour which they had giuen to the Christians, returned vpon themselves, yea in such sort that being fled into their houses, they scarce held themselves secure. Which gaue courage, leasure, and commoditie to the Christians, to gather vp the holy reliques by the light of the lampes of heauen, which they incontinentlie brought to the aforesaid Prince; none of them daring to take or keep them to themselves. And by reason that the said extremity of the storme did not permitt them to finde all the pieces of the holy bodies, they, partly by freindship, and partly for money, gott them of the Mores,

How the said holy reliques were preserved, and of their miracles.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

Punishment of one that would touch the said reliques being in mortall sinne.

How pure one ought to be to touch the said reliques.

THe Prince of Portugall hauing receaued the holie reliques, presently prepared shrines or reliquaries of very great price, to place and preserve them in : But first he committed them to Iohn Rupert, Canon of Saint Crosse of Conimbria, att that time his Chaplen and Confessor, a very pious and Religious Preist, to whome he sent three yong pages of his, who were very simple and virgins, that they might asist him to dry and accommodate the said holy bodies, who in the meane while neuer stirred out of his house, so to preserve themselues from profaning the said reliques in any sort, euen in thought as neere as they could . These youtnes then dried the sacred reliques in a very retired and priuate place, by commandement of the Prince, and separated the flesh from the bones, which they put in a precious chest, to be carried iuto Portugall ; then did it please our Lord to illustrate them by miracle; For a knight called Peter de la Rose, not considering what danger it is for sinners to touch the holy reliques of the seruantes of God, would presume to present himselfe, notwithstanding he kept a wench whome he lasciuiously entertayned, but he had scarcely ascended the middest of the staires, but he fell and lamed himselfe, without power to moue, till being contrite, repentant, and confessed vnto the said Almosner of the Prince, and recommended vnto the Sainstes protesting to a abandon his vicious life, he obtained mercy ; for by litle and litle arising, he discended and went halfe cured vnto the Prince, failing only in his speech which he had lost: the Prince therfore with a great confidence commanded his Almosner to putt one of the sacred heades of the sainstes on his breast, which done he was att the same instant perfectly cured. A squier of the Princes accustomed to handle certaine peices of the said reliques, which were layed to dry on a buckler of his, without receauing any punishment, by reason that he was then free from sinne : But falling one time, by instigation of the deuill, into a carnall sinne, as he thought to handle them, the buckler wheron they were so raysed it selfe, that he could not reach them : wherevpon reflecting on himselfe, he went and confessed, then retourning to the said reliques (which was admirable) he kneeled downe before them, and the buckler being discend to the ground and returned to the sunne as before, they yielded themselues to be touched, This fact cast such a feare into the hartes

of

of the Christians of the Princes Court, that thenceforward vpon this occasion they were carefull not to offend God mortally. This hath bin testified by Steuen Perez, Marquarid de Santeren, who was one of the three Pages that had care to accommodate the holy reliques: he affirmed and swoare the aforesaid, to Dom. Matheiw, Bishopp of Lisbon, confessing that he oftentimes abstained from offending God, for feare to be dilcouered as were the others, by the said reliques which he was necessarily to handle: Many of the Princes family, haue also affirmed thus much, as being present and eye-witnesses therof.

How the Prince departed from Maroccho with the said reliques, and therefore was pursued by king Miramolin, and of three miracles; wrought in the way.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

THe holy reliques being will dried, the Prince caused the heades and flesh to be dried apart, and the bones to be separately putt in two shrines or reliquaries exceeding richly adorned with gould and siluer, and so placed in his oratory, where he made often supplication to the holy Martyrs, that they would obtaine him the fauour to escape the cruelty of the Mores, and without danger to passe into Spaine. For hauing determined himselfe to carry the holy reliques into Portugall, and hauing to that purpose diuers times importuned the king Miramolin for permission, he was so farre from obtayning leaue, that the king on the contrary was aduised to putt him, together with all the Christians that were then resident in Marroccho, cruelly to death: Neuertheles God did so mollifie his hart, that wheras he had manie times denied the Prince himselfe, he then of his owne motion, hauing sent for him, told him that he would permitt him to depart against the aduise of his Councell, who held it requisite for the good of his estate putt him to death; but for his part he could not consent to the death of a Prince, that not onlie had neuer offended him, but had freelie and willinglie done him seruice. The Prince therefore taking hold of this occasion, and loading a mule with the said reliques, he with all his familie tooke his iorney; suspecting that the king would not long continue in this good minde, but would alter his opinion, as in deed he did. But the Prince in such sort putt himselfe to trauell, that he doubled the ordinary dayes iorney, yea he made such progresse, that he was forced

*The Lyons
respect
the said
reliques.*

*The reli-
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the Prin-
ce.*

ced to spend one night in a desert place, called Aroffa, where haunted many Lyons, so that such as saw them take that way, reputed them as personnes deuoured that night. The Prince was not ignorant of all this, but reposing his full confidence in God, by the merittes of the sainctes whose reliques he had, he led them in a place where the Lyons were necessarily to passe in coming vnto him; for they were so neere as that their roarings so full of fury were easily heard, but the holy reliques being layd on the ground, their fury was so restrained, that flying thence they were from that time neuer seene there. Now the king Miramolin, not hauing patience to endure the said reliques to be caryed away to be honoured: incontinently sent after the Prince, a great troupe of light horsemen. Which caused two great miracles; one was that the Prince inspired of God, as the arcke of the testament was of it selfe conducted by the kine, that it mightest where it would, so did he putt the mule that carryed the reliques formost of the troupe, which turning them out of the direct way, conducted them through places vnaccustomed to trauel, by meanes wherof the horsemen that pursued the could not finde them. But this was not all, for as these horsemen of the Mores, were well mounted, desiring to please the king, and withall to satiate their fury, they thought it not sufficient to make their scoutes about the ordinary wayes, but also crossed the feildes, where they so couriously pryed after the Prince, that they found him; which chanced for a nother respect but the more to manifest the glory of the SS. of God, and of God himselfe in his sainctes. For hauing ouertaken the Prince, and heard his people speake, they were by the diuine puissance so blinded, that they could neuer see them; and so these Mores to their extreme amazement retourned vtterly confounded, and the Christians proceeded on their iorney, thancking and praying God, till they arriued att Cepte; where the inhabitantes with great solemnity entertained them.

How the said reliques were caryed to Conimbria, and of two miracles wrought in the way, preserving the Prince from shipwrack, and curing one that had bin lame for thirty yeares.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

AS soone as thy were arriued att Cepte, the Prince gaue order to finde out a vessell readely prepared for Spaine, which done, it was incontinently furnished which althings necessary therunto: they were no sooner embarked, but they were aduertised that a troupe of armed men of the king of Marrocco, sought them through-
out

out the Citty, wherevpon they weighed their ankers, hoised sailes, cutt their maine-cable, and made a speedy cut towards the straite of Gilbaltar, with a fresh winde that was very fauourable vnto them, for which they thancked God. But before they could attaine the heauen the night surprised them; with such a darcknes, that they could not guide themselves, in such sort that they were in extreme perill of shipwrack. But falling prostrate on their knees before the said reliques, to implore the fauour of God by the merittes of his saintes in this extremity, they were instantly illuminated with a cleare light which discovered vnto them their dangerous courſe, in way to dash themselves headlong againſt a rocke: for which escape they presentlie gaue thanks to God. And so proceeding on their nauigation, they arrived att Andalouſia, att the port of Algezire, without any danger, thence afterward att Tariffe, then att Se-uill; att that time the Mores possessed all those places, so that the foresaid king Miramolin, had giuen order to the king of Se-uill that the prince arriving in his kingdome, he should apprehended him, send him prisoner vnto him, & put to death all his company; wherof the Christians of Se-uill instantly aduertiled the Prince, who wheras he intended to sett a shoare att Se-uill, sailed on to Galicia, where he landed, and thence went by land to the kingdome of Leon, then possessed by Dom. Alphonſus his Cousin german; for he was fled from Portugall, vpon some dissention betweene him and his brother, who was king. The Prince entring into the city of Astorga, lodged with a freind of his that had bin thirty yeares sicke of the pally, whome he perswaded to vowe and recommend himselfe to the SS. whose reliques he carryed, recounting vnto him the maruells which by their miracles God had wrought. This poore man fell on his knees before them, and not able to speake by worde, hauing also for long time lost his speech, he in hart and with a very strong faith vowed and recommended himselfe to God, by vertue of the said reliques; And att the very instant in presence of diuers, he leapt sound out of his bed, with a loud and cleare voice praying God. The Prince being by affaires hindred from present going to Conimbria, he sent thicher the said reliques, conducted by a gentleman of note called Asphonſus Perez, of Aragon, who attended them accompanied by many knightes and gentlemen. The king Alphonſus and the queene Vraca his wife, being therof aduertised, sent vnto them with Order to haue the said reliques stayed in a place neere the citty, that they might present themselves before them together with the Clergie, to giue them such entertainment as they worthely deserued.

How the holy reliques were carried to the city of Conimbria in generall procession, where the king was present, and how they miraculously chose the place where they would rest, and how they transported themselves to diuers places, and of the conuersion of S. Antony of Padua, which by example hereof came to passe.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

ALl things being fitly disposed and accommodated, the king & queene, attended with all the nobility, the Clergie and people, went a foote in procession with great deuotion vnto the said reliques, with many crosles and banners, in token of the triumphant victory of the holy martyrs. Comming to the place where the reliques were, hauing deuoutly saluted them, they caused the mule that carryed them to goe before, that she her selfe might choose her way, as she had alwayes done before. So without the conduct of any personne, she went directly to Conimbria, where she entred into Sampsons streer, att this day called the street of the old figtree, and then to the monastery of saint Crosse, att which gate she stayed till it was opened, though the intention of the king were to place the said reliques in the great church. The gate of the said monastery being opened, the mule of her selfe entred into the Church, and went directly before the high altare where she kneeled downe, and so remayned, till she was disburthened of the said reliques, each one admiring the miracle wherby the holy martyrs did choose and make knowne, where they would haue their reliques to repose: for which they were all thanckfull vnto God, and there ended the Procession. The king erected a sumptuous chappell, att the place where the mule kneeled downe, and a rich shrine, wherein were putt the greatest part of the said reliques, others in an other shrine in the cloister of the said monastery, the litle that remayned was sent part to the Church of the holy Ghost of Goueau, where there was a Couent of Religious of saint Francis Order, and an entiere body to the monastery of saint Bernard of Loruant, three leagues from Conimbria, because the Abbesse of that monasterie was sister to the king. Now the very day that the reliques were brought into the monastery of S. Crosse, they began there to shine by miracles: for they cured a great multitude of diseased persons there present, and from that time the miracles haue so continued euen to this day, that they deliuered from perill all such as recommended themselves vnto them, vpon which occasion

it is

it is, that so many strange pilgrimes doe frequent that place. The greatest gaine of that day wheron the reliques were receaved, was of S. Antony of Lisbon, called of Padua, who was then a Canon Regular of S. Crosse, and as such, in the said procession, gaue praise to God among the rest, and solemnised the annuall of the holy reliques: for he merited to be inspired of the holy Ghost, who anymated him with a great zeale vnto his honour, in such sort as he resolved to offer his life for the confession of the holy faith by the example of the said martyrs, whome desiring entierly to imitate, he would begin by the habit and rule of saint Francis, whose true disciples these martyrs had bin.

Of the death of the queene Vrraca, prophesied by the holy martyrs, as before in the third chapter hath bin recorded, and of a vision which her Confessor had thereupon.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

THe Queene Vrraca had great care of her death, because the holy Martyrs had prophesied vnto her therof, yea she was in extreme affliction, considering that their death and the translation of their bodyes was effected as they had foretold: but the issue of what she doubted did succeed: for as soone as she came to the holy reliques, she began to feeble her selfe ill, so that she could not accompany them, but was constrained to goe to her bedde, and the night following she dyed. That very night Peter Nuguez, Canon regular of the monastery of saint Crosse, a man of exceeding piety, and Confessor to the said queene Vrraca, had this vision: He saw a great multitude of Frere Minors, wherof siue went before, but they were conducted by a Religious Father of their Order that gaue a very great splendour; and they entred into the quier of the said Church of S. Crosse in procession, where they very melodiously sung matines: he extremely amazed att what he saw, began to discourse with himselfe, how so many Religious could enter, the dores being shutt as they were, and why they sung matines, without any precedent ringing. Being in this vehement admiration, he questioned with one of the Religious, asking him who they were? how, and where they entred into the monastery att such an hower? The Religious answered him: We are Frere Minors, and because thou wert Confessor to the Queene, and fearest God, it hath pleased his diuine goodness, to reueale vnto thee this vision. He whome thou seest to precede the rest with such glory, is our holy Father S. Francis, whome thou

hast so much desired to see in this life, and the sue which thou seest to follow him, are the five Martyrs of Marroccho which are here shrined. Know besides that the Queene Vrraca is this night departed, and because she exceedingly affected our Order, our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST hath sent vs all hither, solemnely here, for the benefit of her soule and for her obsequies, to sing these Matines: doubt not of her death: for as soone as we are departed hence, one shall come to aduertise thee therof: And the Matines and prayles of God being ended, this glorious procession disappeared, and therewith one knocked att his dore to aduertise him of the death of the queene.

How our Lord chastised the citie and king of Marroccho, for the cruell death of his holy Martyrs.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

THe king of Marroccho remayned not vnpunished, no more did his contry: for the very same yeare did his arme and right hand which he had so wicke dly stretched out against the holy Martyrs, wither, as also did all the right side of his body, from the head to the feet. The people were punished in an other manner: for in three yeares after this Martyrdome, neither in the said citie, nor in a great circuit therabout, did there fall one drop of raine, which caused an extreme dearth and mortality of catell; then correspondently to the number of the Martyrs, the plague continued for five yeares after, wherof dyed the greatest part of the men of that miserable kingdome: but three yeares after the want of raine, the king, together with his Councell, acknowledged that God sent that punishment vpon them in reuenge of his holy Martyrs, and therefore he ordayned a generall assembly of all his people, in the place where the Martyrs had bin tortured, and that in the same publicke place they should crye towards heauen, inuocating them, asking them pardon, and imploring their mercy: which they performed with such confidence, that presently there began miraculously to discend a gentle sweet raine, by meane wherof the dearth and plague by litle and litle ceased. And then did the king permitt the Christians in his kingdome to haue a bishop, with condition that he should be of the Order of S. Francis and might publikly preach our gospell, and withall consented to haue a Church builded in Marroccho, where the sacramentes might be administred, conformably to our Catholique, and Romane Religion.

*The king
Miramo-
lin some
what ac-
know-
ledgeth
his faults
and sa-
tisfieth
the holy
martyrs.*

How

*How saint Francis having vnderstood of the Martyrdome of his children,
With thanckfulnes to almighty God, gaue his benediction to the Mo-
nastery of Alenquer.*

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

THe greatest contentment that S. Francis had euer receaued of his Order, was to heare of the Martyrdome of his five religious: whervpon hauing prayled and thancked God, he spake these wordes: Now may I confidently affirme that I haue five Frere Minors. Then blessing the Monastery of Alenquer, because they hauing long time resided there, departed thence to goe to their Martyrdome, he said: Be thou blessed, O place of the most high, which hast as it were engendred and produced to the king of heauen, five faire flowers of the colour of the rose and of bloud, of a sauour more then sweete, which are five true Frere Minors, the first frutes of this Order. Would to God the Religious that shalbe resident here, might for euer exactly keepe the rule of our Order.

*Of a miracle wrought by the reliques of the holy Martyrs, against an Aposto-
like legat, that endeauoured to withdraw the people from their honour
and veneration, because they were not as yet canonized.*

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

ATt this very time, as the reliques of the said holy Martyrs were exceedingly honoured of the Spainardes, it fell out that a legat of the holy Siege was present, who seeing what deuotion the people had to the said holy Martyrs, moued with an indiscreet zeale, not considering the canonization which I E S V S C H R I S T had made in heauen of the Martyrs, that had bin publicly martyred, nor the miracles that had followed therevpon, he began to cry to the people, rebuking them as ignorant, and forbade them any more to make their prayers to the said reliques, and att the very instant he was aduertised that his Mule which waited for him before the Church was suddenly fallen dead, and thinking to goe see the manner therof, he was immediatlie surprised with so vehement an ague that it enforced him to acknowledge his fault, and the pride which caused him so rashlie to speake against the holie Martyrs, whose reliques he went to visit, and falling on his knees among the people, acknowledging the punishment of God, he cryed out a loud.

THE CHRONICLES

O holy Martyrs ! I confesse that you are canonized in heauen, and because God will haue you honoured and reuerenced on earth, I repent and confesse the errour of my tongue, and begge pardon of you for it, and doe promise that I will henceforward, be the foremost and most carefull that shall visitt your reliques, and in whatsoeuer place I shall be, I will celebrate your merittes. A strange euent ! these wordes vttered, he arose from the ground very sound, and his mule, formerly supposed for dead, to the great astonishment and contentment of each one, arose againe: and this made the reliques of the sainctes more famous.

*How by the intercession of the said. sainctes, a gentleman was deli-
uered from death.*

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

A Poore gentleman of Conimbria was vnexpectedly assaulted by his enemies, neere vnto the Monastery of saint Crosse, so that he ran towardes it to saue himselfe: but being two forcibly followed, he could not time enough gett in, but was enuironed by them, so that, he hauing no other remedy but the inuocation of God, by the merittes of the holy Martyrs, they gaue him as many stabbes and thrustes as they would, without any defence of his, sauing the couering with his cloake, in such sort as he lay for dead in the place. The people that came next that way, carried him apped in his cloake as they found him, in to the said Church there to bury him: but as soone as he was entred into the same, he stood vp on his feet very sound, and confessed aloud that the holy Martyrs had till defended him: and therefore, together with the people he repaired to their chappell to giue them thanckes,

*Of the institution of the procession which is made every yeare in the
month of Ianuary, wherein the men goe all naked to visitt the
holy Martyrs of Conimbria, for hauing bin by their interces-
sion cured of the plague*

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

IN the Bishoprick of Conimbria there is a towne called Fala, where there fell so cruell and contagious a plague, that it dispeopled the whole towne, for the inhabitantes were all either dead or fled, sauing one man, already infected with the disease, and halfe dead,

dead, who seeing himfelfe alone and in fuch extremity, hauing alwayes ben very deuout to the holy Martyrs, he had then with an exceeding ftrong faith, his recourfe vnto them, and made them this vow; That if by their interceffion he were cured of that difeafe, he would euery yeare on the fixt of Ianuary being the day of their feaft att Conimbria, goe vifitt their reliques a foot and all naked, as long as he fhould liue, and would take order that after his death one of his family fhould goe thither in the fame manner, and withall would endeauour to perfuade all the other families of the faid towne to doe the like. This vow being made, he was fo effectually heard, that att the very instant he found himfelfe more foud and ftrong then euer; neither did there any one more dye out of that place, whereto he caufed many from abroad to retourne, and fo it was by litle and litle repeopled; afterward his fellow Cittizens accorded to his vow, yea this deuotion fo encreafed that the neighbour inhabitants, and many perfonnes of note, gentlemen and others accuftomed from thence, as is continued to this prefent, in proceffion, to vifitt the holy reliques on bare foot, with an exceeding deuotion in the moft rigorous feafon of winter. And how foeuer the feafon proue the fixt of Ianuary, being the day of their Martyrdome, though it raine, freeze, or fnow neuer fo much, they omitt not this pilgrimage. Now the order of this proceffion is thus: On the faid day all the Confraternity affemble att the Couent of the Frere Minors, that is without the citty of Conimbria, on the other fide of the bridge, and there about nine of the clock, they ftripp themfelues naked, fending their cloathes to the Monaftery of S. Croffe, leauing on their bodies only linnen breeches of very meane cloth to couer their naturall parts, and a capuce of cloth to hide their face, or a hand-kirchefe, and fo they goe in proceffion, through the middeft of the citty, to the faid church of S. Croffe, where hauing offered their prayers very deuoutly together, they paffe through the Cloifter to enter into a great houfe adioyning, where they reattire themfelues, and then each one departeth att his pleafure.

The 29. chapter is put after the 39. of this booke, as a place more proper vnto it.

The hiftory of feauen Martyrs att Cepte.

H. W.

How seauen Frere Minors departed from Italy, to goe to preach the faith of Iesus Christ vnto the Infidels.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

S Ainct Antony of Padua and others haue left in record, that seauen Frere Minors were ioyned together to goe into Tuscane, a Prouince of Italy, whence they demanded leaue of Brother Helias, then viare generall of the Order, to goe into Spaine to preach to the Mores: he names of these Religious were: Brother Daniel, Br. Angelus Br. Samuel, Br. Danulus, Br. Leo, Br. Nicolas and Br. Vgolin; they arriued att Arragon, hauing elected for their superiour Br. Daniel Prouinciall of Calabria, hauing found a vessell ready prepared for that place, could neuer obtaine permission of the patron therof to carry more then three Religious with him, so that he was constrained to leaue three to come after him. He being arriued att Cepte, with his three companions, did not beginne to preach to the Mores till the arriual of his Brethren, which was on the last day of September, and in the meane time they preached to diuers strange merchantes and other Christians, that from all partes flocked thither. When they were all assembled, they began to discourse and conferre together, what might be the rediest meane for them to profit in the saluation of the soules of the Mores, or to pourchace Martyrdome, reiecting farre all humane feare, and fortifying themselves with a great feruour of spirit, and an ineffable zeale of their neighbours good. And hauing till then remayned without the towne, with other Christians that were not permitted to enter, they resolved to steale in secretly, without the knowledge of any person, that they might not be hindered by the Christians, who could haue stayed them, or aduertised the Mores, who would haue forbidden their entry.

How the seauen Martyrs preached the faith of Iesus Christ to the Mores, by whome they were abused and imprisoned.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

B eing thus encouraged mutuallie by each other in our Lord I E S V S C H R I S T, they began one friday by deuout and feruent prayers to prepare themselves, and on the saterday the six were confessed by their superiour, who confessed to an other, then they communicated and receaued the sacred body of our Redeemer, spending the rest of the day in pious deuotions. And the sonday morning,

reple-

replenished with the grace of the holy Ghost they entred very early into the city: where they began to preach freely and loudly vnto the Mores, admonishing them to abandon the false beleefe of Mahomet, and to embrace the true faith of our Redeemer IESVS. The Mores admiring the confidence wherwith they spake, began first gently to reprehend them, then rudely to iniury them; but seeing these good Religious did perseuer in this pious predication, they did buffet and beat them outrageously; & then hauing bound them, they brought them before the kinge, where they continued their preaching, freely confelising the true faith of IESVS CHRIST, and giuing him remonstrance of the deceatefulness & treachery of the law of the accursed Mahomet, which he must of necessity forsake, if he would saue his soule. The king beholding this poorly attired, and considering their seruour, iudged them to be fooles, as did all his Courtiers; But in regard they had presumed to preach against his law, he imprisonned them, and cast them into a dungeon, where they were loaden with heauy chaines of Iron Manicles, and fetters, which exceedinglie afflicted them, for they remayned there eight entier dayes, in which time they endured much, and in diuers manners.

Of a letter Which the 7. Martyrs wrote to the Christians of Cepte.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

NOW these holy Religious desirous to shunne idlenes, wrote this letter vnder inserted to the Christians residing in the suburbes of Cepte, which they addressed to Brother Hugo, Preist and Curat of Geneuois, and to other Religious, one of the Order of Preachers, and the other a Frere Minor, who were newly arryued in Africa, to administer the sacramentes to the Christians there, and to worck the saluation of their soules; the said letter was thus: Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, Father of mercy, and God of all consolations, who comforteth vs all in our afflictions, and appointed to our Father Abraham the Ramme he was to sacrifice, and permitted him to trauell a pilgrime on earth, and reputed his faith for iustice, wherefore he merited the title of the friend of God: teaching vs thereby to appeare and become fooles before the world, to please and proue wise in sight of the diuine maiesty. And therefore saith he vnto vs: Goe preach the Ghospell vnto all Creatures, and tell them the seruant ought not to be greater then the master. And if you be persecuted, that they haue persecuted me likewise: with which wordes, we his least and unworthy seruantes being moued, haue left our contry, and are come

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hither

hither to preach for the glory of God, and the benefit of our foules, to the edification of faithfull Christians, and the confusion of obstinate Infidels, as the Apostle saith, we being vnto God a pleasing odour, we are to some an odour of life, and to others an odour of death, which could not be vnderstood, but that our Sauour said: If I had not come, and had not preached vnto them, they had not sinned. We are entred into this cittie of Cepte to preach his name, and his holie faith before the people and the king himselfe, who reputing vs sencelesse hath imprisoned vs; it hath seemed expedient vnto vs to aduertise you hereof. And albeir that by the grace of God we endure much here, we are neuertheles exceedingly comforted in our Lord, in whose diuine Maiestie we haue a strong and assured confidence, that he will please to accept our life for a gratefull sacrifice, and therefore to him be giuen glorie and honour for euer.

How the holy Martyrs were againe presented to the king, before whome they constantly preached the faith.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

THe sonday following, which was the sixt of October in the morning, the kinge caused the holy Religious to be taken out of prison and presented before him, then prayed them to deny what they had vttered against his Prophett Mahomet and his law. But they constantly answered that they could not say otherwise then they had done, sith it was truth it selfe; on the contrary they exhorted himselfe to abandon his extreme blindesse, that held him in the hands of the deuill in this life, and led him to eternall damnation in the other: inducing him to embrace the sole true faith of IESVS CHRIST our Sauour, who, out of pure loue, being God vouchsafed to become man, and to dye on the tree of the Crosse to deliuer him from eternall death, and ascending into heauen, prepared for him an immortall life. But this Morian king and his people, shewing themselves deafe to this discourse, determined to separate these Religious one from an other, and then to each in particuler were offered, in the behalfe of the king, riches and honours, at length they were threatened with most cruell tormentes, yea with death it selfe, if they would not accept of their law. Their threats auayled as much as their promises, for God had so transperced their spirit, with the sweet natures of his loue, that they all in their hartes spake these wordes of S. Paule: Who shall euer separate vs from the charity of IESVS? shall the sword?
shall.

afflictions? worldly fauours and richesse? the pleasures of the flesh, or any other allu rementes? and withall couragiously answered, and derided their threatens, accusing Mahomett, whome they tearmed accused, and his law contemptible, carnall, and damnable. A certaine Preuost then drew his sword, and gaue their superiour Father Daniel a dash on the head: then ayming his sword point att his face, and att his hart, he said: conuert thee traytor, or I will procure thee a cruell death; which he did to terrifie the other six, who were by the Iudge and the Counsaillers there present, perswaded, not to misprize the fauour of the king, and to haue compasion att least of their miserable liues: but they confidently answered them, and exhorted them, that being old, and already as it were in the mouth of death, so that they could not long enioy the contentmentes of this life, they would not persist in obstinacy, least their soules were eternally condemned to hell, for adhering to men of this world, and to a law, that their owne consciences knew to be false, as apparently as a thing to be touched with the finger. But these old men held themselues so offended with this speech, though they had bin very fauourable and respectiue vnto them, that they resolved their death.

How the seauen Martyrs were condemned to death and beheaded.

THE XXXIV. CHAPTER.

THe iudge therevpon gaue Order that as ennemies of the law of God, they should be beheaded, wherwith the holy Martyrs exceeding well pleased, did encourage each other: and then the six Religious addresseing themselues to their superiour Father Daniel, and kissing his handes, gaue him thanckes for procuring them these marriages: each of them asked his benediction, and the grace to be the first martyred for the loue of God. This good Father hauing his eyes beteared with ioy, thancking God for such a singular girte, and giuing them his benediction he said. My dearly beloved children, lett vs all reioyce in God, in this festiuall day which he hath pleased to ordaine for the last of our pilgrimage, and be not terrified: for all his Angels are present prepared to assitt vs, they haue opened vs the gate of Paradise, whither if he please we shall this day arrive together, to receiue the crownes of martyrdome and to be eternally glorious. These wordes ended, the executioners stripped the seauen martyrs, inuincible champions of IESVS, and hauing bound their handes behinde their backes, they conducted them out of the

kinges Pallace, with a trompett before them as if they had bin attaind of some notorious crime. But these holy Religious as meeke lambs, went to the slaughter, and hauing their spiritt eleuated to the soueraigne God, ceas'd not preach to the Mores by the way. Being come to the place of execution they fell on their knees, and recommending themselves to God, they ioyfully receaued martyredome, offering vp their innocent soules, vested with the pious purple of their very bloud, with a great admiratiō to the Mores, who as enraged were not satisfied herewith, esteeming themselves (as indeed they had reason) rather vanquished, then to haue overcome. These Ministers of the deuill tooke those holy bodies, dismembred them, and trayned them thorough the dirt, till they were weary; and then the Christians secretly gathered them vp and carryed them into the suburbes, where they were and are honoured and reuerēced for many miracles which by their merittes God wrought there; wherof hauing no other assurance then the affirmation of the inhabitants of the place, I thought it not expedient to committ them to writing, as determining to insert nothing in these chronicles but what is most true and autenticall. It sufficeth that Pope Leo the tenth, graunted and permitted the Freere Minors to celebrate their feast on the day of their Martyrdome, which was the tenth of October 1227. a yeare after the death of S. Francis. So is it att this day celebrated in the bishoprick of Brague the Primacie of Spaine, though in the office of Bracara it is put in the yeare 1221. but it is an errour of the Printer. It is recorded in the end of the legende that a Prince of Portugall, by a speciall fauour obtayned these reliques, and carryed them into Spaine, but there is not to be found any other perticuler mention of certainty in the bookes of the Order.

The 35. Chapter, is put after the 39. of this very booke, as more proper vnto it.

The triumph of two Martyrs of Valencia.

Now two Religious which S. Francis sent to Valencia in Arragon, were Martyred there.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis sent two Religious of pious life to the kingdome of Arragon, to witt, Brother Iohn a Preist & Peter a lay Brother, who arriuing att the citty of Teruel, they caused a chappell to be built there, wherein they dwelt, employing their time in pious exercises, and prayers, and liued vertuously, with exceeding

ding edification, and by their preachings filled the citty with a most sweet odour of their sanctity. The citty of Valencia was then possessed by the Mores, mortall enemies of the Christians, and therein raigned their king Azot, a most cruell persecutor of the faith of IESVS CHRIST, and therefore these two seruantes of God, resolved to preach there, and to offer their liues for the saluation of soules, so palsionate was their zeale of the faith and their desire of Martyrdome. So then goeing and entring in to the Citty, they began to confesse and resolutely denounce to that people the word of God, condemning their erroneous sect, as pernicious and damnable. Wherof the king hauing first made them all kinde of gracious offers to allure them to his law, then vsing terrible threatens to feare them, and perceiuing that he no more auayled in the one sort then the other, he caused their heades to be cutt off, on the feast of the decollation of S. Iohn Baptist, in the yeare 1231. and their bodyes were carefully gotten and buryed by the Christians; God by their merittes working many miracles.

How the reliques of the said holy Martyrs, were afterwards translated to Ternel by the king of Arragon.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

After this glorious Martyrdome, Dom Iames the first of that name king of Arragon, began by the prouidence of God, to warre against and alwayes to putt to the worst, the king of Valencia, subdueing him att each time that they encountred, and taking prisoners a great number of the Mores, gaining daily and possessing his landes and dominions; it happened one time that he tooke prisoners certaine noble men of the Mores, whervpon the Christians of Arragon prayed their king to demaund the reliques of the said S. for ransome of the said prisonners, by reason that by their meanes God did ordinarily worck many miracles, which caused the Christiāns to be very importunate to haue them. This request was easy to obtaine; for the king of Arragon did exceedingly reuerence the said reliques, and the king of the Mores was very desirous to retire his principall champions, for a matter which he regarded nothing at all. Thus were these reliques solemnely placed att Tenuell in a faire Couent of Frere Minors, there expresly erected in acknowledgement of the fauours and graces which in respect of them the Christians haue receaued of God; and to this day great miracles are wrought there by them.

How

How the Morian king Azot became Christian, and gaue the city of Valencia to the king of Arragon, and in satisfaction of his sinne, he conuerted his Pallace into a Monastery of Religious of the Order of S. Francis.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

THe king Azot, perceauing his forces and kingdome daily in appearance to diminish in such sort as he could no longer resist the king of Arragon, resolved to enter into composition with him, and to render vnto him all the kingdome of Valencia peaceably, and withall to be baptised, reseruing condition of honest maintenance during his life: which the king Iames promised not only to him, but euen to all his people that would be conuerted; and to others promising to permitt them peaceably to liue in their law, or otherwile to retire whither they pleased. Which being thus accorded, the king of Arragon entred Valencia to take possession therof, the yeare 1238. on the eue of S. Michael: this was the second time that the Christians recovered it: for Ruy Dias had once before taken it from the Moors, for the king of Castile, after whose death it was lost againe. Now the king Azot became Christian, hauing obtayned in gift of king Iames a rich Earledome, which his successors doe yet enioy, all his moueables, and his pallace, which incontinently after, with the consent of the king of Arragon, he gaue to the Frere Minors, there to build a Church in the honour of the holy Martyrs, in satisfaction of their blood which he had shed; and consequently there was builded a very beautifull Couent.

Of a Miracle wrought by the said holy Martyrs att Teruell

THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

CErtaine yeares after the said Martyrdome, there repaired ouer the City of Teruell and the neighbour places, such a quantity of locustes, that as a cloud they hindred the beames of the sunne in the aire, and on the earth they couered all the plaines: the people made many processions to be freed of this affliction, which yet ceased not to trouble them. But there was a good man that consoled the people, to carry in procession the reliques of the holy Martyrs, which they did, & went in great deuotion to an hermitage that was out of the City, and att the retourne of that processio, all the locustes were vanished so that neuer after were seene more in those quarters then in other places. This much augmented the deuotio of those people towards the holy martyrs.

The

The Martyrdome of fine Frere Minors, With a multitude of Christians att Maroccho. This was the 29. chapter of this booke, transferred hither to giue place to the more famous.

ON an other time, diuers yeares after the foresaid, fine other Frere Minors were martyred att Maroccho, together with all the Christians, men and women that then there resided, in a chappell where they offered their prayers to God for the exaltation of the faith of IESVS CHRIST. This persecution was executed on the sixteenth of September, with such rage and fury of the Mores, that there remayned not in the said citty, so much as one liuing man that durst professe himselfe a Christiā: after this notorius Martyrdome or persecution, the Mores saw a great splendour to disceend from heauen, into the said chappell where the martyred bodies remayned; and heard also all the belles to ring of themselves, and the voices of Angels to sing with an inestimable sweetnes; but their hartes were too obstinatly hardened against God to benefitt themselves by their conuersion. The names of these Martyres are not knowne on earth: it sufficeth that they are recorded in the booke of eternall life.

The Martyrdome of Br. Electus disciple of S. Francis; and of his companions. Taken out of the 35. chapter, and placed here for the reason aboue proposed.

THere resteth no other memory recorded of the Martyrdome of Br. *A Frere* Electus, then this: The Mores tooke Br. Electus & many others (for *Minor* preaching the holy gospell) to putt them to death. He being brought *died with* to the place of execution, tooke the rule of S. Francis in his hand, and *his rule in* said to his companion: Brother I confesse my fault before God and you, *his hand.* of what soeuer I may haue offended and committed against this rule which said, his head was cutt off, then his companions and consequently the others: after that, many miracles were wrought. Touching his life it is recorded that he entred very yong into the Order, in so much that he could not performe the fast therof, but forcing his nature he not only in this cobat ouercame gluttony, but continually chasticed his flesh with a shirt of iron: happy child that began so yong to serue the almighty, and so gloriously ended the course of his holy life.

The end of the fourth booke of the second part of the Chronicles of the Frere Minors, wherein are recorded the histories of 21. disciples of the holy Father S. Francis.

THE



THE FIFT BOOKE
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS,

WHEREIN IS CONTAINED THE LIFE, DO-
ctrine, death and miracles of the glorious Father S. Antony
of Lisbonne, called of Padua. Translated as the former.

*Of the birth of S. Antony, and his education by his Father: how he
left the world, and became a Canon regular in the Order
of Saint Augustin.*

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



HE glorious Father S. Antony was borne
in the noble and populous city of Lisbonne,
the Metropolitan of the kingdome of Por-
tugall, in the westerne partes of Spaine, his
house was directly ouer against the great
gate of the Episcopall Church, dedicated to
the Virgin Mary: this Church is very famous
among other respectes in regard of the bo-
dy of the victorious Martyr S. Vincent that
there reposeth. The Father of the said S. An-
tony was called Martin de Buglione, and
his Mother Teresa de Teuery, both of them illustrious in vertue and
bloud, in which respect they were found worthie in the flower of their
marriage to enioy this child. He was baptised in the said Church, of
which parish also he was; there was he first named Ferdinand, so that
he was called Ferdinand, Martin Buglione, till he tooke the habitt of S.
Francis. He began his first learning in the said Cathedrall Church, with
the Christian doctrine & the manner to prayse God: he serued the quier
both by night and day, offering the first frutes of his age to our Lord

IESVS

I E S V S C H R I S T and to his most holy mother, whome he chose for his particuler Aduocatrice, euen from his tender yeares. He continued in this pious course fifteene yeares, in which time he learned the study of humanity, afterwarde his bloud began to heat, and his sensuall appetites to desire carnall and worldly pleasures; As soone as he perceaued it, he endeauoured by the feare of God to restraine them: and because it is very difficult to conuerse among so many thornes and not to be pricked, he resolved to take a secure remedy. Wherefore abandoning all conuersations of this perillous world, he repaired to the Monastery of S. Vincent, without the citty, where were Canon Regulars of S. Augustin, leading a life of very exemplare piety, whence he neuer departed till he had taken the habitt, and made his profession surmounting all the inconueniences and importunities of his kinned and friendes, that omitted no meanes to diuert him from it: there did he establish his foundation in the seruice of God. But in regard that his worthie iudgement and great prudence began to appeare to his kinned and friendes, they repaired vnto him for his counsaile, and aduise in their affaires and difficulties, running vnto him as to an oracle, in such sort that being vnable to endure that exceeding disturbance of spirit, hauing with verie much difficulty obtayned the permission of his Superiour, he retired to the deuout and Religious monastery of saint Crosse of Conimbria, of the same Order, hauing spent two yeares in that of Lisbone. And he so profited and proceeded there, that it was to each one apparant that he was by a secrett and diuine vertue, not by a lightnes of spirit, retired thither. For proceeding daily & ascending from perfection to perfection, he aymed at a most perfect end of his life: as being replenished with the spirit of wisdom, by his continuall reading and meditation of the holy scripture, wherein hauing for his instructor the only and true master **I E S V S C H R I S T**, he made such progresse, that his learning was sufficient to shunne vices and embrace vertues, to refute errors and support the truth.

How for the desire of Martyrdome, he became Religious of the Order of S. Francis.

THE II. CHAPTER.

ABout that time the same of the holy Father S. Francis did spread it selfe ouer all the world, as also of the Frere Minors his disciples, of whome, as is said, there were already monasteries in portu gall, they, by their pouerty and contempt of the

*S. Antony
became
a Frere
Minor so
goe in
that kind
to preach
to the
Infidels.*

world conuerting many people to penance; the holy Father Saint Antony, as I haue formerlie said, being one of the Religious of saint Crosse, that receaued the holy reliques of the glorious martyres of Marrocho, and being as a noble Elephant, encouraged by the sight of the blood shed for the loue of God, he resolved also to enter into combatt for I E S V S C H R I S T, reputing his repose wherein he liued for the seruice of God, to be nothing in respect of that course: O spiritt really happy, who not only was not terrified with the sight of the bloody sword of the Tyrant, but was so encouraged therby, that the seruour of diuine charity in him was greater then the imbecillitie of humane fragillity. Wherefore thirsting to effect this good desire, he resolved first to take the habitt, and therewith to imitate the life of those glorious Martyrs, by the same meane to obaine the two crownes; and to ascend from one degree vnto an other, to that soueraigne perfection of Martyrdome, exercising himselfe before he entred into that conflict and combatt. Now there were two Religious of saint Francis, which ordinarily liued in a Church of the title of saint Antony, without the City of Conimbria, with which saint Antony hauing casually mett, he discouered his intention vnto them, as to two Angels of Paradise; and they gaue eare vnto him with great contentment and comforted him, then they appointed him a day when they would repaire vnto him to effect his pious desire. Hauing taken leaue of them, he ceased not to sollicite and importune his superiour, to vouchsafe to giue free consent to this his holy intention, which as a thinge perordinat of God, he att length with much difficulty obayne. The afore said Frere Minors comming on the prefixed day, they gaue their habitt to saint Antony euen in the monastery of saint Crosse; and then being cloathed, they caried him with them to their oratory. Att his departure, one of the Canon Regulars that was much disquieted therewith, said vnto him; Well, goe your wayes in good time, it may be you may proue a saint, giuing him such reproach, as if he thought one could not serue God but in the Religion of saint Francis: saint Antony humbly answered him: If it should happen that I proue a saint, it may be you would praise God for it. But doubtles these Religious should not murmure if God transferred this saint from their Order to that of saint Francis, considering that in their Church they possessed five of his martyrs, and with all it cannot be denyed but that the worthe and pious education of saint Antony, ought to be attributed first vnto God, and then to their holy Religion, wherein he spent eleven yeares, so that he entred into the Order of saint Francis the 26. yeare of

of his age, being then Priest, the yeare of grace 1220.

*How the name of Ferdinand was chaunged into Antony, and how he departed
for Marroccho, with intention there to receaue Martyrdome,
and was by tempest driuen into Sicilia, thence he
Went into Italy, and thence to the generall
chapter of S. Francis.*

THE III. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father being come to the Oratory of the said Religious, knowing that the title thereof was saint Antony, he prayed them to giue him that name, abhorring his owne as secular and too prophane, and to the end that not being so called of all, he might be much lesse knowne, and disburded of his kinned and friendes: besides we may well attribute this same to the work of the holy Ghost, such that many of his most note-worthie elect haue chaunged their name, as first the Patriarkes, Apostles, and other his fauourites. Hauing then thus chaunged his name, he desired to effectuat the designe for which he became Frere Minor, and to attaine the same, he trauailed into Africa, there to receaue the crowne of Martyrdome; but he being afflicted with a great and long infirmity, began by diuine inspiration to conceaue, that his designe was not gratefull vnto God, but that he would employ him in the entreprise of peace, where he must fight with a long and continuall martyrdome, not as a priuate soldier, but as a Capitaine and Doctour of many people; he therefore resolu'd to experience and more clearly to enforme himselfe of the will of God; And to that end imbarqued himselfe againe for Marroccho: but by a tempest he was driuen into the Ile of Sicilia, where being landed, he went to the Couent of Frere Minors, where he vnderstood that they made preparation to goe to the Generall Chapter at Alsium; wherefore, being assured of the will of God, he much resisted his owne proper will, and entirely resigned himselfe into the handes of his goodnes, and so in their company, he came to the Generall chapter: which ended, it was noted that he alone by certaine diuine disposition, remayned vndemaunded of any Superiour, wherefore comming humblie to the Romane Proinciall called Brother Grarian, he prayed him to vouchsafe to demaund him of the holy Father saint Francis, and consequentlie to instruct him together with the other Religious Nouices, in the ceremonies and obseruations of the Order: So the true seruant of

Great
humility
of S. An-
tony.

God preserving the vertue of humility, made himselfe generally to appeare ignorant. Thus hauing obtayned what he desired, he was no looner arriued att the Couent with his Superiour, but he prayed him to permitt him to liue solitarily in some sequestred place; which was also graunted him, and a residence aloted him in a litle hermitage vpon the mountaine of saint Paul, where there was a litle Couent of oher Religious of their Order; there he spent his time alone and in a priuate celle, seruing God in continuall meditations and prayers, fortifying his spirit in his lone against the temptations of the deuill, and chastising his body by continuall abstinence and fastings, refecting only and rarelie with bread and water, whereby he so weakened and subdued himselfe, that his Brethren, walking sometimes with him to conferre of spirituall matters, did testifie that he was so feeble as he could not stand on his feet, so that he seemed alwayes ready to fall. This elected spirit of God, for a certaine time thus conueised as ignorant and simple, amongst the simple, not presuming to aspire to any glorious act or notable enterprife, for the glorie of God and the saluation of faithfull soules, as being preuented of his first intention: But entierlie resigned himselfe vnto God, absolutelie renouncing his owne will, it being also the most secure way that can be taken, and most pleasing vnto God, who afterwarde in time and place maketh vse of such seruantes, as he did of this.

*Of his first preaching, and how he was afterward made preacher
by saint Francis.*

THE IV. CHAPTER.

THe time of taking Orders being come, the F. Guardian of saint Antony being to send certaine of his Religious to receaue them, himselfe would associat them, and took saint Antony for his companion, so they were, with certaine Dominicans, together att Torlie, where the houre of collation being come, and they all att table, the Guardian began to entreat the said Dominicans to make some exhortation for the consolation of the companie: but they out of humilitie excusing them selues, the Guardian, inspired of God, commaunded saint Antony in vertue of obedience to speake some thing for their edification, according as the holy Ghost should dictate vnto him. The glorious Saint as much as he possiblie could excused himselfe, alleaging that he had neuer bin accustomed to any other thing in Religion but to wash the shooe-clowtres, to lay the bucke, and dresse the kitchin, and being.

being ignorant he was lesse fitt for such an office then for any other:
 herein he spake nothing but what his Brethren there present knew
 to be true; so that he was easilie beleueed: for none had yet per-
 ceaued his learning, he hauing no bookes, but he had a notable
 and assured memorie, and in his mentall Prayers was of a verie
 high contemplation, two particuler giftes, wherwith God and na-
 ture had endued him, and withall he had well studied in formertimes;
 yet in speaking latin he was verie sober and sparing. Being
 then vnable by his preceptes to resist his obedience to his Guardian,
 who not admitting his excuses as forcible, constrayned him to satis-
 fie his commandement, he began to speake simply: But the holy Ghost
 inspiring and working where he pleaseth, would not haue this his
 cleare burning light any longer hidden, but that he should giue light
 and illuminate his holy Church, he I say, made him so to shine and
 appeare, that his audience perceauing his eloquence and his learning,
 both pourchased by practise and infused by God, they were all
 astonished and amazed: but much more were they edified by his
 humility, in that he had so long time concealed this talent. The
 holy Frather saint Francis being hereof by the Guardian incontinently
 aduertised, giuing thanckes to God, he authoised him to be a preacher,
 and commaunded him to make vse of the notable benefitt which his
 diuine Maiesty had bestowed on him, and so he was chosen of God,
 and deputed to the holy Ministry of his word miraculously, and not
 by his owne industry; he also confirmed his doctrine by an entier
 and meere voluntary contempt of the world, and a most simple
 innocentie, by a perfect resignation of his will into God, by
 mortification of his flesh, and by a very deep humility, together
 with his charity towards God and his neighbour, hauing a most
 seruent will to die in their cause; though God, for his greater
 croune, and the edification of the faithfull, disposed otherwise
 of the effect: When he began to preach, as before he feared not
 to goe among the barbarous Pagans, much lesse did he then feare
 being among Christians, the power of Princes and Potentates of
 the world. So that without acception of personnes, indifferently
 he touched and stroake all sortes of qualities with the sword
 of God, yet alwayes vsing the meaner sort more mildlie, to auoyde
 to scandalize them.

*S. Antony
 preaching
 vnprovi-
 ded by
 obedience
 was
 knowne
 to be a
 notable
 preacher.*

How, where and of whome he learned, and after read Diuinity.

THE V. CHAPTER.

THis glorious S. was the first Religious of the Order of the Frere Minors, that studied and read diuinity, with consent and by permission of the holy Father S. Francis, who sent him to Verselles, with an other called Brother Adá de Marisco, an Englishman, to heare the Abbott of sainct Andrew, a most famous diuine of that time, and one that had lately translated and commented vpon the workes of sainct Denis Areopagita, out of Greeke into Latin: then it was that the Vniuersity of Millan and Pauia, were transferred to Verselles; the said Abbot gaue those Religious a gratefull countenance, for that he held himselfe so edified by them, as he freely confessed that they taught him a doctrine, not humane, but heauenlie, and that he beheld in them, the hierarchies of Angels: these good Religious in the meane time profited exceedingly: for they attayned that very yeare to such a sublimity, and eleuation of vnderstanding, that they seemed not only to haue formerly studied the said hierarchie, but euen to haue seene and frequented the same. Wherevpon the afore said Abbot, in the third chapter of his said commentary, oftentimes reiterateth these wordes: Loue penetrateth farther then exterior science can doe, as is read to haue appeared in many Bishoppes, who not being learned, yet very subtrilly penetrated to the deepest secrettes, of the most sacred Trinity, as my selfe haue experienced in the holy Religious Br. Antony, of the Order of Frere Minors, by the familier conuersation which I haue had with him: for albeit he was litle conuersant in worldly sciences, when he learned Mysticall diuinity, he so penetratiuely vnderstood the same, that I may truely say of him that which IESVS CHRIST affirmed of S. Iohn Baptist, that he was a burning candell, that illuminated the world; in regard that he lightened the people exteriorly, by diuine knowledge wherewith he burned interiorly by a celestially loue. Touching the lecture which he read, the licence which S. Francis sent him was thus: Br. Francis, to his most deare Brother Antony, health. I am content that you read Diuinity to the Brethren, prouided that it be in such sort as that the spirit of holy prayer be not weakened neither in you, nor them, according to the rule. He so reuerenced, sainct Francis (whome he called Bishop) that he would neuer read Diuinity, though he were by the Religious exceedingly importuned therevnto, till he had receaued the said licence of him, by vertue wherof he first read att Montpelier in Languedoc, then att Bollonia, and att Padua: the greatest
part

part of his learning he had obtained of God, alwayes eleuating his spirit in him, as once it happened vnto him intending to preach before an Abbot of saint Benets Order, vpon the wordes of S. Paul, written to saint Denis, for att that time he continued a long space rauished in extasie.

How he preached in France, and of the miracles he wrought there.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Saint Antony was sent into France, to be Guardian in the Couent of Limoges in Aquitaine, by his workes and predications to conuert many heretiques that then were there, and to confirme the Catholiques: which he so happely performed that the memory therof remaineth euen to our dayes, besides many miracles which God there wrought by him; wherof we will recount some few. As he preached the Palsion on Maundy thursday night or good friday morning, in the Church of S. Peter of Quadruuio in Lymoges, at the same time that the Religious did solemnely sing Matines in the Couet, when they came to the lesson that was to be read, he instantly appeared; and read it all yet without leauing the pulpit where he preached void of his presence. It may be thought that God interposed the ministry of some Angell, that entertayned the people whiles he sung the lesson in the Quier. Almost the like accident arriued att MôtPELLIER, where he was Lector, for, preaching one day to the people, he remembered that he had not appointed any one to sing an Alleluia in his place, it being his office to sing it: whiles he was preaching, he stouped in the pulpit as to repose himielfe, and was att the same instant seene to sing the Alleluia in his Couent, yet departed not from the great church where then he preached. This diuine vertue in S. Antony is not to be so much admired, as if the like had neuer bin, for the same arriued to S. Francis, when he was seene in a fiery chariott, and when he appeared in forme of a crosse att the Chapter of Arles, as in his life we haue related: And to S. Ambrose, when in a moment he was present att the obsequies of S. Martin att Tours, though he was seene att Milan the very same time.

*S. Antony
ny was
twice
seene in
diuers
places att
one in-
stant.*

How he deliuered a Religious, and a Nouice, from great temptations.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THere was in the said Monastery of Limoges, a Nouice called Brother Peter, who was exceedingly tempted to leaue his habit. S.

An-

Antony as a right vigilant Pastour ouer the flock of God, knew this temptation in spiritt, and therefore called and drew him a part, then causing him to open his mouth, he blew and breathed therein, saying, My sonne, receaue the holy Ghost. O admirable accident? This Nouice fell instantly to the ground as dead. The other Religious hastening to rayse him, S. Antony took him by the hand and lifted him vp. The Nouice then affirmed that he had bin in heauen, and proceeding to recount what he had seene, the S. bid him to keep it secret, which he did, and was neuer after tempted to leaue his habitt, but was an example of piety to all his Brethren. About the same time S. Antony being gone to the Abby of Semoniaco, depending on the bishoppricke of Limoges, a Religious of the said Abby, was exceedingly tempted with the flesh, wherof finding no remedy by prayers, watchings, or whatsoever other mortifications; he resolved to haue recourse vnto S. Antony, to whome in confession he discovered the secret of his hart, affectionately beseeching him for the loue of God to assise him. S. Antony hauing heard his confession, putt off his owne coat, and gaue it to the Religious to putt on, which hauing done, he so as if the very vertue which was in the S. had bin in his coat, communicated vnto him his chastity, that the temptation for euer ceased, as the Religious did diuers times afterward acknowledge and confesse.

Of the miracles Which he wrought in France, vpon two that were very deuout vnto him.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

IN the same citie of Limoges, an honest woman deuoted vnto him, and to his Order, had a very peruerse husband, ielous, and without the feare of God, who did often beat and torment her because she did too readily additt her selfe to the seruice of S. Antony, and of his Couent, as well in bestowing almose on them, as in procuring it of others, according to their necessity. It happened one day, that vpon some affaires of the Couent, she priuately retired her selfe somewhat late, wherwith her husband was so vexed, that he cruelly beat and abused her; for he tooke her by the haire, and pulled it almost all off, but this vertuous woman carefully gathered it together, and layd it neatly on her pillow as if she meant to make them grow againe, then simplicly layd her selfe to rest, and the next morning early, she sent for S. Antony, who came to her, supposing she would be confessed. But she related vnto him, what she had endured for his seruice, shewing him her haire; and adding with all that she beleued, if he pleased to pray to God for

for her, which she besought him to doe, her haire would take roote againe: the S. admiring hereatt, returned to the monastery, where hauing assembled all the Religious, he recounted vnto them the affliction of this woman, and her request: and therefore inuited them to pray together for her, which they did, and att the very instant the haire torne from this womans head were fast rooted as before, whereatt her husband was so amazed and withall so satisfied, that he resolved thenceforward to be as gracious vnto his wife, as formerly he had bin curst and cruell, beleeuing her to be an honest and chaste woman, and from that time he shewed as much or more affection to the Frere Minors then his wife. S. Antony had caused a Couent to be built att Berne, a place depending on the said bishopprick of Limoges, vpon the declining of a mountaine, whither he very artificially drew a conduct of water: for descending from the same mountaine, it issued out faire and cleare, as out of a fountaine, sufficient for the vse of the said Couent, which neuer failed them: the S. often repaired thither, to liue there more austere-ly, and with better conueniencie to apply himselfe to contemplation. The cooke one day telling him that there was nothinge to giue the Religious their dinner, he sent him to a lady exceedingly affectionate vnto him, to demaund of her some Colewortes for the dinner of the Religious, aduertising her that they also had nothinge to eat. This lady commanded her chamber maid, to gather some; but att the instant, there fell such a streame of raine that the mayd refused to goe; which her mistris perceauing, she prepared, notwithstanding the raine, to goe gather them her selfe, which her seruant seeing, she preuented her mistresse, and speedily ran into the garden, to gather the Colewortes. But it was admirable to see, that this mayd went and returned without one droppe of raine falling vpon her.

By the prayers of S. Antony haire torne off took roote againe.

A streame of raine did not wet a maid employed in the service of the Frere Minors.

He knew the illusions of the deuill, by diuine inspiration.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

S. Aint Antony being one day to preach in the said bishopprick of Limoges, in a Church of S. Iulian, there assembled such a concourse of people, that the Church being vnable to containe them, the S. was enforced to ascend into a chaire seated on a scaffold, erected in a spacious place to that effect; and before he began to preach, he aduertised the people, that they should not trouble themselues with any thinge that might happen; during his sermon, because he knew well that the deuill with all his power would endeavour to disquiett the: but the end should be his confusion. So a litle after that he had begū, the supporters

S. Antony foretold that the deuill would trouble his sermon.

of the scaffold brake with a great feare and crye of all the audience: yet none receaued hurt therby, but being instantly reaccommodated, the sermon was finished, and heard with great deuotion, especially in regard of the person that preached.

*And discovered
a lye of
the deuill
to the
same end.*

The S. preaching an other holy day, there came a Post into the Church that brought and presented a letter to a gentlewoman, wherby she was aduertised that her sonne hauing some discordious quarrels was slaine by his enemies: and the manner how. But the S. cryed out from the pulpitt where he preached, saying: disquiett not your selfe, gentlewoman, nor you people be not troubled, for this trayterous Post is a deuill, that which is written in the letter, is false, you shall incontinently see her sonne: the deuill hath played this prancke to disturbe you. Herevpon the deuill vanishing, his fraud was discovered to be vaine: wherof the gentlewoman prayled and thanked God.

*He also
discouered
vnto
his Religious
an
illustion
of the deuill
to diuert
them from
prayer.*

The S. being att prayer one night after Compline, according to his custome, it being in the monastery of Limoges, whence some of the Religious being gone forth, they saw a great field appertayning to one of their freindes and benefactours, full of men that spoyled it, tearing of, the eares of the wheat already ripe: they pitying the losse of their affected friend, ran to the S. and very pafsionately recounted vnto him what they had seene. Wherto he answered: Trouble not your selues Brethren, with a matter of nothing, but retourne to prayer: for they whome you haue seene robbing, our friend, are diuels, that seeke to trouble vs, to diuert vs from prayer: know ye that our benefactour shall now receaue no detriment. The Religious obeyed their Superiour, expecting the issue hereof till the morning, when they saw the field as free from damage as before; wherby they knew it to be an illustion of the deuill; hauing therefore discovered his deceipt, they thenceforward had a more reuerence to the deuotion of the sainct.

Of miracles wrought by the S. in his preachings.

THE X. CHAPTER.

AS Saint Antony was one day to preach at Limoges, there was such a concourse of people assembled, that no Church in the city could containe them, so that he was enforced to preach in the open aire. In the middest of his sermon the sky began to be troubled and the weather chaunged, for it began furiously to lighten and thunder, then did the aire thicken with grosse and very black cloudes, so that there was appearence of an extreame impetuous and instant raine; which caused the audience to resolute of retiring themselves. S.

Antony

Antony prayed them not to stirre, assuring them that no inconueniencie would befall the, provided that they put their confidence in him, who neuer frustrated the hopes reposed on him. On these wordes the people relyed, & heard out the rest of the sermō, which ended, each one goeing out of that spacious place, where in former times had bin a very ancient Pallace, called by the Gentiles, the camp of Arcas, to retire to their home, it was admirable to see that euery where round about, the fireetes were all drowned and ouerflowne with the abundant streame of the raine fallen from the skye, without so much as one droppe fallē in the said field, which was absolutely miraculous.

An extreme shower of raine did not wet nor fall vpon an audie-

As he preached on a time, there was a foole that troubled all the audience, S. Antony admonished him, and prayed him curteously to be quiett. But he answered the S. that he would not desist, vnlesse he would giue him the corde wherwith he was girded; which S. Antony putting of, deliuered vnto him. The foole hauing it, did presently kille it, and withall his foolishnes left him, and the vie of reason retourned, and so he fell at the feet of the S. and demaunded him pardon, to the exceeding edification of the people.

sermō of S. Antony though it ouerwhelmed all the neighbour places.

S. Antony preaching in a towne, a woman hauing taken a cawdron of boylling water from the fire, to hasten to heare him, the deuill being vexed therewith, depriued her of her iudgement, which God permitted for his greater glory, so that in steed of putting her litle child into the cradle, the put him in that fiery hote cawdron, and so ran to the sermon, which ended, her friendes, as the manner is, demanded of her how her child did; the poore woman presently comming to her selfe, remembred that, thincking to lay her child in the cradle, she had put him into the said cawdrō; for which, being vtterly overcome & melting into teares, she rā with her other neighbours to her house, where she found her child playing in the said cawdrō, as if he had bin in a bath; which caused the Mother & her company to praise and thanck God & his holy seruant.

A foole hauing kissed the cord of the S. was cured.

Almost the like accident happened to a woman, in regard of her desire to goe to his sermon, for retourning she found her child dead, stifled in the cradle where she had layd him: wherfore retourning incontinently with her neighbours to the S. she fell at his feet, beseeching him to restore her, her child. Wherto the S. answered: Beloued sister, retourne to your home, God will cōfort you: which making the womā exceeding ioyfull, she speedily hastened home, where she found her child aliue and found playing with litle stones, which neither she nor he had seene before.

By the merittes of the S. a child being in a cawdron of boilling water was not hurt.

A yong man being conuerted by a sermon of the S. desired to confesse vnto him, but the sobbinges, sighes and teares which by a deep contrition, he poured out, would not permitt him to vtter one word, wherevpon the sainct said vnto him; My child, goe and write your

An other child raised from death.

Effect of true contrition. finnes: which he did, and retourning to the Sainct, and vnfoling the paper to read them in confelsion, he found them; by the diuine providence, all blotted out, wherwith, as may be iudged, he was exceedingly contented.

Matt. 6. Making one day a funerall sermon, vpon the death of a notorious vsurer, he tooke for his texte these wordes: Where thy treasure is, there is thy hart: which sermon being ended, he willed the kined of the deceased, for better confirmation of what he had said, to goe to his house and looke where he had layd his mony, telling them that there they should find his hart, which was not with his bodye: So going with many people in company, they found the very hart of the vsurer amongst his mony, yet hote, breathing, and beating: this miracle, with many others is painted att the Bolonia chappell of the Sarazins, intituled *sainct Perronelle.*

S. Antony caused the hart of a vsurer to be seene after death amongst his mony.

Of the efficacie, vertue and seruour of his prayer.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

The deuill caused a stolne psalter to be restored to S. Antony. **T**He great vertue and efficacie of the prayer of sainct Antony appeareth by many examples, in that not only other creatures, but the infernall spirittes obeyed him, as by the sequel shalbe discovered. When he did read diuinity att Montpellier, a Nouice secretly ran from the Couent, hauing stolne from him a psalter commented by his owne hand, whereon he studied to preach to his Religious, in which respect he much esteemed it, so that knowing of this theft he was exceedingly troubled with all, and presently had recourse vnto prayer, where he enforced the Nouice to restore it. For as he was to passe ouer a bridge, the deuill appeared vnto him extremely horrible, hideous & fearfull, and threatning to kill him with a sword which he held in his hand, if he would not carry backe the psalter to Brother Antony, he constrained him to retourne, with such terroure and contrition, that falling at the feet of the S. he obtrayned pardon, and was againe admitted to the habitt.

This S. hauing accomplished his prefixed time of prelature att Limoges, he thought it conuenient to retourne to the chapter. In his iorney he lodged in a towne at the house of a poore charitable woman, where God intending to confirme him in his grace, by some tribulation wherby his loue might appeare, permitted this woman, the more to honour him, to borrow of her neighbour, a faire cuppe of glasse, which his companion taking slight hold of, fell out of his handes, and brake in two peices, and the wine was spilled on the table; which the

carefull Martha perceauing (little respecting the glasse) ran instantly and took a bottell, and carryed it to the Celler to fill with wine, for till then she had only drawne in the said drinking glasse, because she would not be too long in filling the bottell, and make the Religious that were already att the table, in the meane while to expect, determining to take the bottel when they were eating: But comming into the Celler, she found that filling the glasse she had bin too hasty and forgotten to thrust fast the faucett into the vessell, so that the wine was all run out; wheratt exceedingly greiuing, she retourned all weeping to recount this mishapp vnto the Sainct, who incontinently declining his head vpon his arme, prayed to God, and the glasse of it selfe was sodenly reunited; which the poore woman leeing, she thought that as the glasse was conioyned, so the wine might also be retourned into the vessell: wherfore running speedily into the caue, she found her vessell so full, though in the morning it were halfe emptye; that it wrought, as if it had bin new vnrefined wine, and ran out att the bung: wheratt being vterly amazed and halfe beside herselfe, she scarce tooke time to serue the Sainct the rest of his dinner, but that she retired herselfe to shunne occasion of vaine glorie, leauing the inhabitantes of the towne piously disposed, thenceforward to entertaine the holie seruantes of God, verely beleeuing (as in deed it is true) that wealth neuer faileth, but rather encreaseth by charitable

S. Antony by his prayers reunitied a broken glasse, & made wine re-tourne into a vessell that was run out.

How our Lord Iesus Christ was seene in the armes of saint Antony.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

Saint Antony for certaine dayes preaching in a citie of France, he was inuited by a deuout gentleman to accept a lodgeing in his house whiles he remayned there, allotting him the principall room entier to himselfe quietly to spend his time in study and deuotions: but this gentleman walking one night about his house, and passing by chaunce before the chamber of the Sainct, he saw a great light issuing out through the chinckes of the dore, wherfore looking in att the key hole, he saw vpon a great booke lying before the Sainct a very faire child, glittering and shininge with resplendant light some beames, who casting himselfe on the neck of the Sainct, did clip and embrace him: as also in extreme amorous manner the S. did the like, being neuer satisfied with beholding him. The sweet and gracious child in his amiable embracings reuealed vnto him that his host beheld them, The Sainct know-

wing that he would not depart as long as I E S V S CHRIST; remayned there, was willing he should for a time enioy his contentment in that admirable aspect, that rauished the soule of the gentleman out of the world; and then this p ecious child vanishing, the S. instantlie opened his chamber dore, and calling the gentleman, he coniured him by the loue which he boate to him whome he had seene, not to discouer to any liuing person, what he had seene till after his death, which he promised and performed, but as soone as he vnderstood of his death, he could not satisfie himselfe with recounting, and assuring it with teares and strong oathes; which, in respect of the credit of the gentleman, for his worthie qualities, and the pietie of his life, being generally beleueed, it gaue occasion to paint the S. with a child on a booke in his armes.

Of his prophesie of a Martyr before he was borne, and of the same Martyrdome.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

AS he visited a woman att Afsifium, great with child and very nere her time, after he had exceedingly comforted her, she recommended vnto his prayers her deliuey, that it might be happie and easy. He not vnmindfull of her, recommend her to our Lord, and the first time that he saw her againe, he prophesied and willed her not to feare, because first she should be deliuered easilie; secondlie her child should liue; thirdlie it should be a man child: fourthlie he should be pious and feare God: fiftlie he should be a Frere Minor: and sixtly he should be a Martyr. Now the three first of the conditions being easilie verified, it shall not be out of purpose also to iustifie the other three. The child then being borne, and baptised, was called Phillip, and liuing in manner of an Angell vntill he came to conuenient age, he became a Frere Minor, where being fortified in the feare and loue of God; he trauielled with exceeding deuotion in pilgrimage to the holie land. And being in Azoto, when it was by treason taken from the Christians, who being in number two thousand were all condemned to death, he obtayned of those perfidious dogges to be the last that should be martyred, they supposing that he would renounce and deny I E S V S CHRIST. But this Sainct when this spectacle horrible to the world, and gratefull to the diuine Maiesy and to him began, did animate and comfort them all with exceeding courage, crying vnto them, that God had reuealed vnto him, that the

very same day he should ascend into heauen with more then a thousand martyrs : wherwith being much comforted they all offered their heades, as pleasing sacrifices vnto God, vnder the sword of the executioners, who cutt them off. Now it being reported vnto the Soldan that he exercised the office of a preacher; he commanded all the ioyntes of his fingers one by one to be all cutt off in presence of the Christians; which notwithstanding he desisted not to exhort them all to that glorious victorie, in such sort that they all misprising the honours and riches offered them, by the Mores, and the tortures wherwith they threatned them, being by the valour of the Saint confirmed in I E S V S C H R I S T, they with one voice cryed out, that they would follow Brother Philip, on whose choice of life or Martyrdome they relyed; which the Soldan taking very despitfullie, caused him to be sleied aliue, euen to the Nauell, and then his tongue to be cutt off, which supporting with inestimable constancie and notable patience, he the more enflamed and moued the rage and furie of the Mores, and the hartes of the Christians more willingly to suffer death, as a momentarie matter, seeing him with an inuincible hart to endure the same, by such cruell tormentes, in the midst wherof he ceased not by the gestures and motions of his bodie to exhort them; beeing vnable to speake by reason that his tongue was bereaued him; Att length he was beheaded with the rest, and in token of their croune (a thing which the Mores beheld full sore against their willes) their bodies that remayned many dayes in the street, without buryall, yelded no offense, but a pleasing fauour: Thus was the admirable prophesie of the glorious Father S. Antony accomplished.

Of an other prophesie of his, touching an other Martyr, and of his Martyrdome.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

PReaching in France in the citty of Puy where he was Guardian, as often as he saw a Notary, that was impious of life and conuersatiō, he remouing his capuce would doe him very humble reuerence. The Notary knowing himselfe vnworthy to receaue such honour, by him that gaue it vnto him, hauing many times, endured the same, he imputed it to simplicitie, yet att length he sought to shunne the meeting of the S. turning from him a farre of, because he would not be saluted by him: but it one time happened that he could not preuent the Sainctes meeting of him, who saluted him as before, yea more hūbly; which putting the

the Notary into great choler, he came to him and said: if thou wert not a Religious man, I would long agoone haue sheathed this my sword in thy body. But tell me thou varlett, what cause hast thou in this manner to flout me? The S. very humbly answered him: My beloued brother, be you not troubled, I beseech you, but beleuee that I salute you only to honour you, and the reason is such; hauing desired to shed my blood in the seruice of the diuine maiesty, I haue not bin found worthy nor hath it pleased God to satisfie me therein. But his diuine maiesty hauing reuealed vnto me that you shall dye a martyr, I haue euer since, and still shall, yeld you reuerence. Besides I most hartely beseech you, when you shalbe in that glorious conflict, to be mindfull of me wretched sinner. Hereat the Notary chaunged his choler into laughter, and deriding him went his way; but in short time after, it was iustified. For being inspired of God, to goe with the bishop of the said city to adore the holy sepulcher, and in an instant hauing changed his lewd conuersation into the contrary, arriuing there, the bishop discoursing with the Mores touching our faith, and being rudely refelled, the notarie for the first and second time endured it, but att length being ashamed of the tepedity of his bishop, and fearing some worse illue, he told him, that he did not defend our faith as he ought: and then himselfe very courageously disputed against the Mores, and confuted them, affirming for their reproach, that their Mahomet was the sonne of perdition, damned to hell by almighty God, as themselues should be if they did not acknowledge their errours: which hauing said, the Mores presently tooke hold of him, cruelly beat him, and neuer ceased for three dayes together to torment him, which expired, leading him to execution he confessed to his other companions, that S. Antony had prophesied vnto him that martyrdom: And they afterward retourning, haue testified the same to all the world, and so he consummating his martyrdom, ioyfully rendered his soule to his Creatour.

Of the office of his doctrine, and his seuerity against sinnes.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THis S. of God, with a very great dilligence, and admirable prudence, sowed the word of his diuine maiesty in the soules of the faithfull, being neuer wearyed by his continuall labours, trauiailing through diuers cittyes, townes, villages and castelles, ouer mountaines and vallies, and this he did out of his extreme zeale to assift the soules redeemed by the precious blood of our Lord, as one instructed rather by heauenly then humane doctrine, he so disposed of his documents

mentes according to the necessity of his audience that they all were satisfied : in respect wherof his sermons were reputed for so many miracles : they that neuer heard him preach, were at deathes dore with desire to heare him, but especiallie the learned, as well in regard of his eloquence, as of his exceeding subtilty and viuacity of spirit, wherwith he admirably gaue to althings which he handled, their proper signification, valure, number and weight with a notable art. He also reprehended the great personnes of this world with such constancie and seuerity, that the most famous preachers trembled with feare when they heard him, and did admire how it was possible he could haue such boldnes : many would withdraw themselves as not able to heare such open and manifest reprehensions, and those that remayned couered their faces. Yet these reprehensions were intermingled with a competent and iust quantitie of salt, which is the admirable vertue of discretion, according to opportunity of time, place, and personnes. For albeit his discourse att the beginning seemed sharpe, yet the conclusion was gracious, milde, and supportable to all, in such sort that without any scandall he terrified sinners, comforted the weake, encouraged the pusillanimous, and made the most obstinate to tremble.

Preaching one time att Bourges, where was held a Synode, he addressed his speech to the arch-bishoppe concerning certaine articles of faith, wherof he interiourlie doubted, and so dextrously accused and reprehended his incredulitie, laying open vnto him his errors by many authorities of holy scripture, that the arch-bishop was not onlie not scandalized therby, though in deed he felt himselfe stung to the quick : but euen went directlie at the end of the sermon, which a verie penitent and contrite, and freelie discovered his hart vnto him, who procured him such remedie as was necessarie for his saluation, so that he proued thenceforward verie faithfull vnto his God. And this Sainct did not onlie assit the soules of the faithfull Christians by preaching, but in diuers other manners, God also fauoured and furthered the ardent zeale which his seruant had of the saluation of soules, as when in the night he appeared vnto them, enforming them of their sinnes, and admonishing them to goe to such or such a Confessour, telling them, how and by whome he was sent vnto them, which was a singuler remedie for manie sinners, who through feare or shame durst not confesse, for feare to manifest their enormous sinnes. But by the example following may appeare of what efficacie the wordes of the S. were.

A citizen of Padua, called Leonard, confessing vnto saint Antony; among other sinnes that he confessed, he accused himselfe to

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haue giuen such a blow with his foot on his mothers belly, that she fell to the ground. The Sainſt very ſharply reprehending him for it, among other ſpeeches told him, that the foot which dared to ſtrike the belly of the Mother whence it proceeded, deſerued to be cutt off alleadging that ſentence of I E S V S C H R I S T: If thy foot ſcandalize thee, cutt it off and caſt it from thee, and ſuch other thinges as might induce him to contrition. After the ſaid demonstration, hauing giuen him abſolution, the ſimple man exceedingly greeued at his offence, ſuppoſing that the Sainſt had enioyned him to cutt off his foot, being in his lodgeing tooke a litle hatchett, and with a merueillous courage cutt off his foot: which done, the extremes of death affaulding him, the exceſſiue paine he endured cauſed him to cry ſo loud that his mother heard him, who with manie of her neighbours came running, and ſeeing the torment which he endured, adioyned her cryes with thoſe of her ſonne, who opening the cauſe of the diſaſter vnto her, ſhe knowing no other remedie, went to ſainſt Antony, and reproached him as hauing ſlaine her ſonne, relating vnto him the miſerable accident. The Sainſt vtterlie amazed, excuſed himſelfe with the truth, affirming that he had not bin the cauſe, hauing onlie told him that it deſerued to be cutt off, but not willed him to cutt or cauſe it to be cutt off: but not content with anſwearing her he went to ſee him, and being moued with his pious ſimplicite, after he had firſt offered his prayers to God, he tooke the foot from vnder a bench, and ioyned it vnto the legge, wherupon he gaue a benediction, and ſo reioyned them, that there remayned neither ſigne nor any paine. So ſtanding vp found and luſtie on his feet, they all together gaue thanckes vnto almighty God.

*A man
hauing
cutt off
his foot
S. Antony
reioyned
it to
the leg
Whence
it was
cutt.*

How he reprehended the tyrant Ezelin.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

Ezelin a tyrant of Padua, hauing by fauour and ſupport of the Emperour Federic the ſecond, gotten the dominion of many faire and great citties of Italy, he exerciſed ſuch cruelties the like wherof haue not bin heard, to make himſelfe more feared of his ſubiectes, and none durſt to reprehend him or demaund him the reaſon. Hauing one time without cauſe ſlaine diuers gentlemen of note, ſainſt Antony reſolued to goe and perſorme his office vnto him. And comming before him, he ſpake in this manner: Cruell tyrant and enemy of God, when wilt thou end thy rage, and forbear to ſhed

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the bloud of faithfull Christians, which without cause thou ordinarily spillest? Know and assuredly beleue, that the seuerer and terrible sentence of the iustice of God doth attend and will fall vpon thee, when thou least fearest it. To these wordes he added many other like, then obiecing vnto him the graces and fauours which he had receaued of God, he opposed also the homicides, violences, robberies, murtherous assaults, and insupportable tolles wherewith he afflicted his subiectes, and how by his permission, they endured the destructions of whole citties. As he spake this, his guard admiring this free speech, expected onlie the Tyrantes commaund to massacre him, thinking this his accustomed patience verie strange, especially vpon such iniuries: but the successe was other then they expected, for the Sainct hauing ended his discourse, this cruel woulfe att the same instant became a meek lambe, and hauing put off his girdle, he layd it on his necke, and fell at his feet calling for mercie vnto God and him for his misdeedes, and promising for satisfaction to his diuine Maistie, that he would accept and performe such penance as he should impose vpon him. The people present were also in admiration att this Metamorphises of the Tyrant, as much as att the raising of a dead. Now the Saint departing vpon assurance of this good promise, Ezelin turning to his people, said vnto them: Doe not admire to see me for the present thus humbled: for I protest I saw to proceed out of the face of this holie Father a beame of diuine splendour, which did so terrefie and quelle me, that I seemed to sinck into hell. But God minding to chastice his ennemies by the handes of others of his ennemies, permitted that this Tyrant kept not long his holy purpose, for he began to doubt of the vertue of the Sainct, of whome he would make a second triall. Knowing that he publicke preached against his cruelties, he sent him a present by some of his people, to whome he gaue charge, that if the Sainct accepted the present, they should kill him: but if he reiected it, they should patientlie endure what soeuer he sayd, without giuing him any replie, and so should retourne. They hauing offered vnto the Sainct the present which was of great value, with the greatest humilitie they could faine, praying him to accept the small charitie which Ezelin had sent him, and to pray to God for him, therby experienced what he was: for he answered them, God preferue me from receauing this present, which is but the bloud of the poore of I E S V S C H R I S T, wherof he must render a strict account vnto God: and therefore hast yee speedily hence, for feare least this house fall and vtterly oppresse you, or that the earth

A Tyrant humbled himselfe att the remonstrances of S. Antony.

The tyrant repenteth S. Antony.

open and swallow you vp. These wordes made them so ashamed and mute, that without replying they returned to giue answere to Ezelin, who thenceforth esteemed him the true seruant of God : and therefore willed his people to permitt him to say of him what he would, which was no small restrainēt vnto him whilest he liued.

How att one sermon of his, he conuerted 22.theeues.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

TWo and twenty theeues being assembled for robbery, retired into a very thick and bushy wood, where they murdered the passengers: Italy was then (by reason of the warres there) full of such theeues, who feared not to goe disguised into the citties, as did these of whome we speake, who resolved to proue if the truth and effect answered the reputation giuen to the preachings of S. Antony: for they had heard, that as an other Elias, he burned the hartes of men with the fiery light of the word of God: which they experienced in themselves: for att the beginning of his sermon, they began to feele their hartes to mollifie: then by litle and litle to receaue the heat of the Holy Ghost, so that att the end of the sermon, they went all to conferre with him, who after he had giuen them necessary reprehension, told them that he would absolue them on condition they would be very wary neuer after to retourne to their vomitt, assuring the in the behalfe of almighty God, that if they fell againe they would miserably perish: as it after arriued to some of them, who returned to their filth againe as before: others persevered piously, and especially one of them, who had seriously obserued and made his profit of the endes of both his good and bad companiōs, who afterwarde affirmed and assured the same, and said that he was enioyned, to goe twice to Rome in penance, to visitt the holy Apostles in remission of their enormous finnes, saying that as he had accomplished his penance, so did he hope to obtaine remissiō of his misdeedes.

Of the conuersion of many heritikes, by a sermon which S. Antony made to the fishes of the sea, which gaue him eare.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

ITaly being vtterly disordered, by the afforesaid warres, and mingled with all nations that embrued their barbarous weapons in the body of that contry, though they were called in by the Italians themselves, that supposing to ruinate each other, they might afterwarde be their

their prey, as in deed they were: In such troubles of warre, the Italians did not only diminish their former vertues, which made them like terrestriall Angels, and more excellent then all other strangers in curtesie and loue, but they did also diminish that faith, for which they had renounced the Empire of the world, submitting their neck to the most sweet yoke of I E S V S C H R I S T, and of his immaculate and holy, Catholike Apostolike and Roman Church; and besides that, (as it is incident to men to admitt the habitt of those with whome they conuerse) they dranke the horrible cup of heresie and abomination, the heretikes multiplying in Italy, by the extreme liberty of life then there in vse. Now sainct Antony hauing so much profited in France, where he conuerted a great number of heretikes, as also in Romania, whither then many were rettyred, of whome he conuerted a great part by miracles, and particularly their Arch-heretique called Bonuillo de Bimini, who for thirty yeares had persisted obstinate and buried in the darcknes of heresie: the sainct therfore endeaoured to displant all the rest of that prouince which there were exceedinglie augmented. Now as he one day preached vnto them, they refusing to heare him, because disputing against them he did vtterly confound them, and being without the sea shoare, att the mouth of a riuer called Marecchia, he called the fishes in the name of God, to heare his holy word, sith men, whome he had re deemed by the precious bloud of our Lord IESVS CHRIST he his only Sonne, had refused it. It was a worthy and admirable thing, to see almost an infinite quantity of fishes of the sea and of the said riuer, instantly vpon those wordes to appeare on the water, which by litle and litle assebling, sorted themselues according to their kindes and qualities, placing themselves in admirable Order, so that the lesser drew neere the shoare, and the greater by degrees without, in such sort that it was a most pleasing sight to behold them. Being settled and accomodated, the sainct made them this sermon following: My Brethren fishes, who being the creatures of the comon Creatour as we are, are also bound to prayle him, considering that you haue receaued of him your being and life, and he hath giuen you for habitation the noble element of water sauoury & saltish, according to your necessity and entertaynement. Further he hath therein giuen you shelters and retraites to shroud you from the ambushes of your persecutors. It hath pleased him also that this element should be transparent, cleare, and pearceable to the eye, that you may the more easily see what you are to accept and what to shunne: therfore also hath he bestowed on you pinnes and force to guide you selues where you desire: but you are especially obliged vnto him, for that you alone of all other creatures, were saued in the vniuersal deluge; by meanes whereof you are encreased in number above all other. You were chosen to saue the

*Of the
sauours
which
God be-
stoweth
on fishes.*

Prophett Ionas, and hauing preferued him three dayes in your belly, you restored him a liue vpon the earth. You haue payed the due and tribut for our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and for his chiefe Apostle S. Peter, you haue also euer bin his food during his life, and after his death when he was risen. For which reasons and others which for the present are out of my memory, you are exceedingly obliged to thancke almighty God. The fishes approued these wordes, with all the gestures they could shew, bending downe their heades, mouing their tailes, and making signe of desire to come neere him. Vpon which demonstratiōs, the holy Father turned towards the rebellious and stony hartes of the heretikes, and, in presence of a great multitude of people (there assembled by the recourse of such a number of fishes that stirred not, expecting till the S. dismissed them) he said vnto them: God be prayled that the very fishes doe desirously heare his word, but you, wherfore demurre you on your conuersion? What other testimony doe you expect more euident of the vertue of the loue of God? Are not you ashamed to appeare of lesse vertue then the fishes who are voyd of reaso? All the heretikes there presēt the without farther expectation were couerted to the faith, and the Catholiques more solidly cōfirmed. The fishes neuer stirred, but their nūber still increased without any confusiō of their order, till they had all had the benediction of the holy Father, after which they diuided theselues, & each one went where he pleased, and S. Antony retourning into Riminy there conuerted the rest of the heretiques, that being there had not bin present att the miracle.

How he conuerted a very obstinate heretike by a miracle of the blessed sacramēt.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

Sainct Antony preaching one time att Tholouse (though some as firme it to be att Riminy) against a very obstinate heretike, of the reall Presence of IESVS C. in the B. Sacrament, he many times cōuinced him euen by reasons, in which the heretike not knowing what to answere, told the S. that in deed he was forced to yeld in dispute: but the reason was, because he was more subtile, a greater philosopher, and better learned then himselfe, which he acknowledged: but could not yet confesse and acknowledge that his affirmatiōs were to be beleueed: and therefore challenged him to proue by effectes and shew him by some miracle of the B. Sacrament, wherby he might know that God was present there: which if he could performe, he did promise and sweare, to adhere to his opinion and beliefe. The saint answered him that he should consider and bethinck himselfe what miracle he

he desired, & by the grace of God he should see it effected. The heretike replied that he would shutt vp a mule, and keep her three dayes without meat, then they both would be present together, himselfe with otes & the S. with the B. Sacrament, and if the mule did leaue the otes and adore the B. Sacrament, he would be content also to adore the same. S. Antony accepted this condition: And the third day being come, & they both present att a publike place, the holy Father hauing celebrated masse before he communicated, he shewed the sacred Host vnto the people that held burning torches in their handes, there being presente the greatest personnes of the cittie, who attended him to the place where the prooffe was to be made. The heretike was there ready with the hungry Mule, which alreadie smelled the oates which her master had brought and brayed after them. Saint Antonie then commaunded her, by the vertue of the liuing God, who was present in the Host which there he held to adore it. Her master also cast before her all the oates he had, yet leauing the oates, she came with her head declined very humbly to adore the B. Sacrament, before which she kneeled downe, to the exceeding contentment of the Catholikes there present, and the confusion of many heritikes, especially of the aforesaid, who was conuerted together with them.

Of the conuersion of many heritikes, by a miracle of S. Antonyes, eating poysoned meat, without receauing any detriment.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

THis miracle so encreased the hatred of heretikes against him, that they resolved to procure his death. And to this purpose one of them inuited him to his table: which the saint promised, in hope by some familiar discourses to conuert him. Euen as for the same end our Redeemer did eat with Publicans and sinners. Saint Antony then being att table with manie heretikes, he knew by diuine reuelation, that the meat sett before him was poysoned, as also the wine appointed for him to drinck, for which he modestly checked them, & reprehended their treachery. But they, in steed of being confounded and acknowledging their fact, with a brasen face answared him, that IESVS CHRIST in his gospell promised his disciples, that albeir they should drinck or eat poyson, it should not hurt them: And therefore (sayd they) had they done that onlie to proue that speech, so that if he refused to eat therof, he must acknowledge the Gospell to be false: whereupon the holy Father, consulting with himselfe what he should doe, found therein.

therin some difficulty; for one the one side he feared it might proue a tempting of God, who seemed to haue reuealed the same vnto him to the end he should forbear it: on the other side desirous not to preiudice the gospell, he resolved to eat the poyson, on condition they would become Catholikes, if it did not hurt him: wherto they accorded, and the S. said vnto them: Well then my masters, I drinck and eat your poysonned meat and drinck, not with a will to tempr God, whose wordes I firmly beleeuē: but to manifest vnto you the truth of his word, and also as zealous of his gospell to whome althinges obey: then he dranke and eat therof without receauing any detriment, either then or afterward. Which the heretikes perceauing, they were conuerted to the faith of the gospell, the wordes wherof they had experienced to be puissant, aboue all naturall reason, and in deed it was reasonable, they should expell the poyson out of their soules, seeing corporall poyson, by vertue of the wordes of the gospell, to be annichilated.

How in one sermon and att one time, he was heard by many strangers to preach in their seuerall languages: and a woman heard him far off.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

POpe Gregory the ninth published a great Iubilie att Rome, there to declare the expedition of the Christians called Croisade, against the Moors, who then had possession of the holy land: in respect wherof there was a great concourse of people att Rome that repayed thither from all partes of Europe. S. Antony one day preaching there before a huge assembly of people, the number being exceeding great of French, Grecians, English, Italians, Almanes, Sclauonians, Spaniards, and other strangers, they all heard him preach in their owne naturall tongue, as heretofore the Apostles of our Sauour had bin: which much amazed the people. But besides this, the Pope hauing heard this sermon, called him the holy arke of the testament, in regard of the merueillous copiosity of his doctrine and eloquence, wherwith he in such sort linked together, the sentences and wordes of holy scripture, by new and high interpretation, wherby it manifestly appeared that it was not he but the holy Ghost that spake, who by his holy seruant taught these people the true meane to ascend to heauen. This other miracle was also of no small consequence.

A woman exceedingly desiring to heare S. Antony preach, her husband not permitting her to goe, because it was a great league from the citty, she went vp into her corne-loft, so to content her sight with beholding the place where her spirit was, to witt, the Church where the

was the Sainct, where her body could not be : which performing very attentiuely and a long time, she admaired to heare the Sainct beginne his sermon, wherefore calling her husband, she protested that from the place where she was, she miraculously heard Iainct Antonyes sermon, vsing the same gestures that he did and relating his wordes, wherein she so persisted to confirme hir husband, that himselfe would needes make triall therof, and to that end mounting into the garrett, he putt his head out att the windoe, and heard the end of the same sermon, then presentlie went to conferre with such as had bin personallie present, and found that the wordes which his wife affirmed to haue heard in the beginning of the sermon, were the verrie same that the Sainct had vttered. And therfore astonied att so great a miracle, and repenting that he had hindred his wife from being present therat, neuer after withdrew her from her deuotions.

Of certeine miracles which he wrought vpon some that were deuout vnto him.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

Sainct Antony incessantlie labouring to gaine soules vnto God in the cities of Italy, by his preaching, retourning oneday from that exercise, and retiring into his Couent, he tooke a secrett and vnknowne way, to auoyd the honours ordinarilie giuen vnto him, where he mett a poore woman carrying her sonne, that was vtterly crypled and voyd of the vse of his limmes, who hauing a farre off perceaued him, came and fell at his feet, humbly praying him to haue compasion of her, and to voutsafe to make only the signe of the crosse vpon her sonne, wherby she had great confidence in God, that he would recouer the vse of his limmes: and the more the Sainct excused himselfe, the more she redoubled her petitions and cryes, saying as the Chanaan did to I E S V S C H R I S T: haue mercy *S. Antony cured a criples, only with the signe of the crosse.* on me: whervpon, together with the request of his Companion (who was a very deuout Religious) he made the signe of the crosse vpon the child; and forthwith he was cured, retourning on foot to his pittifull mothers house, whence she had brought him to the S. who prayed her to conceale this miracle att least during his life: affirming that it was her faith, and not his merittes, that had obtained this grace and fauour.

A girle of Padua was in such sort crypled, that she could not goe *And another.* but on her handes, and besides, was often tormented with the falling sicknes, which caused her to foame and vse strange gestures through

Xxx

the

the extremity of her cruell affliction; her father hauing presented her to the S. and requested him, as the aforesaid mother had done, he cured her by the signe of the crosse also; wherein is to be obserued, that in such occurrences the faith of those that present and request, ioyned with the merittes of the Sainctes auayleth much, to obtaine grace and fauour of God.

*A woman
fell into
a filthy
ditch
without
fouling
hir appa-
rell, by
the me-
ritts of
she S.*

The holy Father goinge one holy day to preach in a spacious place, there being no Church great enough to containe the people that sought to heare him, a woman that followed the presse of the people, was att lenght so thrust, that she could not auoyd to be ouerthrowne into a ditch full of filth, wherewith the woman being much greiued, not so much for the apprehension of the hurt she might receaue in her body, as for feare to foule her rich apparell wherof that was the first time of wearing, and that her husband who was peruerse vnto her would be offended with her, had recourse vnto God by the merittes of the S. that she went to heare, whome she deuoutly inuocated, and herewith she was seene to arise out of the dirt wherin she had bin plunged, without any appearance of ordure on her apparell, to the exceeding amazement of all the beholders.

Hauing written a letter to his prouinciall, an Angel carryed it, and brought answere therof.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

THe Sainct hauing spent long time in preaching, hearing Confessions, giuing counsaile, and reading att Padua, he much desired to retire himselfe into some solitarie place, where he might more commodiously applie himselfe to contemplation, and to that end, he wrote to his Prouinciall, the which he accorded him: and hauing left this letter vpon a table in his Cell, he went to pray his Guardian to procure him some messenger to carry the said letter faithfully to the Prouinciall, which the Guardian hauing done, he retourned to his cell, but found not the letter: which made him suppose that God had miraculously taken it away, to the end he should not remoue thence, wherefore retourning to his Guardian, he told him he was otherwise determined: But certaine dayes after, in such a time as a messenger might carry the letter and bring answere therof, he found on his table the answere which his Prouinciall had made therevnto, permitting him to retire; and doubtles there is great appearance that this letter was carryed, and the answere brought by an Angell, God thereby giuing vs to vnderstand,

how

How pleasing and gratefull the demandes of his faithfull seruantes are vnto him.

How he was twice in spirit at Lysbone in Portugall, to assist his father.

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

THe Father of the Sainct was a gentleman of Portugall residing att Lisbone, who hauing managed a good part of the reuenue of the king his soueraine, had also giuen a iust account therof vnto his officers, and withall deliuered them in, the mony without demaunding acquittance or any discharge, relying on them as his freindes, at least supposing them to be such: but certaine monthes after, these gentle companions, as worldly people, demanded againe the mony they had receaued of him, and summoned him to yeld a new account vnto them of the administration of the mony he had in his chardge. This good gentleman was exceedingly amazed, not knowing what to doe, considering he had no specialty to help himselfe against them in that which they required; wherefore knowing the danger of his owne case, he went to them, to endeauour to put them in minde of the finishing and deliury of his accountes, thincking therby to bring them in the end to acknowledge and confesse the truth. And being before them that sate and held the place of iustice, they most audaciously and impudently denyed that he had so much as presented his accountes, much lesse had he finished them and deliuered them any mony. But att the instant S. Antony appeared, and was present there, who grauely sayd vnto them: Giue an acquittance to this good man, of the mony he deliuered you proceeding of his chardge, and of the receipt of the kinges mony, on such a day, in such a place, att such an houre, in such and such sortes of coyne: which if you refuse to doe, God will punish you for it. Which they hauing heard, exceedingly terrified, they gaue a sufficient discharge to the Father of the S. who very ioyfully retourned home, giuing thanckes to God for that he had bestowed on him such a sonne, who vanished as soone as he had vttered those wordes.

S. Antony caused an acquittance to be giuen to his father which was deliuered him and for which he was much troubled.

Some time after, there was a yong man slaine before the house of the Sainctes Father, for whome his ennemies had laid waite in the night as he was to retourne from the great church, which is neere to the said house, into the garden wherof the dead body was cast ouer the walles, where the next morning he was found of the officers, by the trace of blood freshly appearing in the street: whervpon the Father of saint Antony, with all his family were imprissoned, and forth with condemned to death: and as he was conducted to execu-

He rayfed tion, the S. being preachinge att Padua it was reuealed vnto him, who
one mur- then resting on the pulpitt wherein he preached, he went to relieue his
dered to Father, and att the very instant of his comming to Lisbonne, he rayfed
make the murdered party, and made him publicquely to confesse that his Father
him testi- had not slaine him; yet not discouering the murderers. The party rayf-
fie that ed then tournng to the saint demaunded absolution of him, of an ex-
his Fa- communication which he had incurred, and besought him to pray to
ther had God for his soule: which the saint hauing graunted him, he fell dead into
not slain the graue. And by this meane in one instant he deliuered his father from
him, and corporall death, and the murdered person from eternall; then retourned
to absol- to his sermon, and being inspired of God, he reuealed vnto the people
ue him of where he had bin. Many of Padua wrote to Lisbonne of curiosity to be
an exco- enformed hereof, and were ascertained of the verity; by which meane
munica- thole of Portugall were more perfectly resolu'd of the matter.
tiō, who
after-
wardes
fel dead
again
as before.

How he endeauoured to preserue his Order in the ancient and first obseruance,
and how for that end he caused Brother Helias to be displaced,
who had bin by the Pope, constituted and named Generall,
after the death of Br. Iohn Parent.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

ASS. Antony himselfe most exactly obserued what concerned
the Order wherof he made profession, so also could he not in
any sort endure the dissolution which he too manifestly per-
ceaued, wherfore now reprehending this Br. now that, he suffred many
tribulations att their handes, which he did not much regard, so that he
might effect what he desired, to which purpose he endeouored to vnite
and gaine vnto him many ancient and feruent Religious, with them
to resist the relaxations of the principall Religious, who especially were
those that depraued the Order, and of these the principall was Br. He-
lias, as being also chiefe of the Religion, made Generall therof by Pope
Gregory the ninth, after the death of Brother Iohn Parent, who being
learned, very expert in worldly affaires, and fauoured of many great per-
sonnes, attempted, after the death of S. Francis, to demaund diuers pri-
uiledges of the court of Rome, which he obtayned for himselfe and the
Religious: wherein he wanted not such as would second him for this
new liberty of life, and the lardge way which he had opened. So by the
support and assistance of his followers and adherentes, he cruellie perse-
cuted those that did contrary him, and especiallie all the companions &
first disciples of S. Francis, and next to them S. Antony, and Br. Adam
his companion, as zealous of the Order, who att length no longer able

to endure such a ruine, opposed themselves against him publickly at the Chapter, where they found not any one of their opinion, or at least that durst speake a word, so that all the Religious there present arose against them, charging them that they murmured, caused and rayed division in Religion, and therefore they were so persecuted, that they were enforced to appeale touching their abuses vnto the Pope, and to that end to goe to Rome; where being arrived (notwithstanding the endeavour of Brother Helias, who sought to gett them imprisoned by the way) in presence of the said Pope, who was a singuler fauourer and protectour of the Order, they layd open the life of Br. Helias and the relaxation of the discipline of the Order, which by his euill example he peruerued and brought to ruine. Which being well vnderstoode and considered by his Holinesse, he ordayned a generall Chapter to be held at Rome, wherein himselfe in person was President. Now this chapter being assembled, S. Antony proposed the cause of his appeale vnto the Pope, alleading that it was vpon the persecution which B. Helias inflicted on those that were zealous of the Order, as enemies of the relaxation and liberty of his life & new rule, which tended to the ruine & subuersion of the Religion, contrary to the obligatiō & duty of the Generall thereof. Br. Helias herevnto answered, that he had bin forced by the Religious to accept of that office, that he had aduertised them that he could not goe on foot, nor liue in cōmune by reason of many necessities of his, & that in a Generall Cha. they had permitted him, to eat what he would, yea, gold if it were needfull. Besides, that hauing a horse in the stable, he must of necessity haue a seruāt, & consequently could not be without money, wherof he had permissiō frō the holy Sea, as also for supply of some necessities, and likewise for building the Church of Alsisiū and to relieue many Religious, in their occasions. S. Antony replied that albeit he were permitted to vse a horse, yet was he not allowed to maintaine a horse in stable of such a price as he did, and so well furnished, as all the world was scandalized theratt, and though he were permitted to eat euen gold in his necessity, yet was it not graunted he should horde and heap vp treasures. Brother Helias then answered S. Antony, that he had lyed: whereatt the Pope who was well enformed of the truth of his life, did much admire, and would no further testimony against him, then this his proud answer, which made cleare the rest: and therefore hauing commanded silence to all, with teares in his eyes, he vttered these wordes; whē I resolued to make this Religious Generall, I thought it would haue bin for the good of the Order: but alas I experience the contrarie; and see that he is a disturber and ruinour thereof. Wherefore I deprive him of that office, and will that in his place be presently elected one other, that is zealous and a protectour of the Euangelicall law. Which

done, the Pope exceedingly commended S. Antony, and gaue him his benediction, disapproving and making voyd the sentences which Br. Helias had denounced against him, and those that were zealous of the Order, then prayed and exhorted him to assemble and committ to writing all his sermons, that they might be printed and yeld a publike profit: and that he might more commodiously apply himselfe therto, he by speciall priuiledge exempted him from all other offices and chardges of the Religion, and thenceforward was euer much affected vnto him, so farre forth as after his death he canonized him.

*Of the last lent that he preached, of the great fruit of his preaching,
and of his pious worckes.*

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

BEcause it would be perhappes more tedious to you to read, then to me particularly to describe all the Prouinces, where this glorious S. hath preached, and consequently the affection, reuerence and deuotion, which all personnes, as wel Princes, gentlemen, burgeses, as the meaner people carried towards him, and how well, by his doctrine, life and miracles, he recouered to almighty God the lost soules, I will endeauour, to make the same appeare vnto you altogether by the onlie relation of the last sermons he made at Padua, in a lent that he preached there. This saint then being exempted by the Pope as before is said, the yeare of grace 1230. in a Generall Chapter held in the month of May, that he might the more commodiously employ himselfe for the saluation of soules, hauing passed and trauelled ouer manie Prouinces, in all which he sowed the word of God, he was at length by the holie Ghost conducted to Padua, where he had formerly much profited; In respect wherof he was very particularlie loued and reuerenced of the inhabitantes of that cittie; and therefore when he began to preach there againe, such was the confluence of people that pressed to heare him, that he was forced to preach in a spacious field without the Cittie, there being no Church capable of the people that from all partes flocked thither, though there were some verie great. Wherefore from the beginning of Lent, the deuill perceauing the great fruit which he did and would produce, he tooke him, and so wrested and crushed his throat, that as he after confessed to his companion, if the sacred virgin, whome he inuocated had not assisted him, appearing vnto him with a great light and to his comfort, he had bin strangled: but arming himselfe with the signe of the crosse, and so deliuered from the ambushes of the deuill,

will, he gaue infinite thanckes to God and to his glorious Virgin mother. And being become more courageous (though he were verie feeble by reason of his abstinence and the labours which he ordinarily vndertooke, which so depressed him, that he had daily a litle fitt of an ague) his zeale of the saluation of soules, being more forcible with him, then whatsoeuer other consideration, he ceased not to preach all the whole Lent, and to spend all the rest of the day in spirituall exercises, as to heare confessions and to giue Counsaile: but it was a worthy thing to behold the seruour and deuotion, not only of the Paduans: but also of the inhabitantes of the townes, borowes, villages, and castles there about, that in such abondance flocked to his sermons, that some went with light in the night to take their place in the field. The bishop was present att his preaching with all his Clergie, as also the principall of the Cittie; maryed women, maides and yong gentlewomen frequented them withall comelines and modesty, and without any pompe, wherby it was easy to iudge with what spirit they were induced to heare him. During his predication all the merchantes and artificers did shutt vp their shoppes: audience of iustice was omitted, and all other offices ceased, so that it seemed some solemne feast. In the time of his sermon the audience was so quiett, that so much as one word was not heard amongst thirty thousand persones there present: and it succeeded that they all returned replenished with the spirit of compunction: He that could touch the saint or speake vnto him, esteemed himselfe happy: and if he had not bin purposlie guarded, they would haue rent and cutt his habitt from his back and left him naked; for such was the seruour of these people, that they seemed to see in him a true Apostle sent to them by almightie God. By his meane notorious and inueterat quarrels were appeased; prisonners sett att libertie; debtes quitted and forgiven, offences and iniuries pardoned and forgotten, and mony and other thinges stolen or ill gott, were restored: Briefly what els? *Effects of the preachings of S. Antony.* men and women long accustomed to sinne were publikelie conuerted, and did penance for their sinnes, in such sort. frequenting the sacraments, that the Priestes had scarce time to serue them. The glorious saint hauing filled the Garner of almightie God with most pure come, after he had tryed it, and burned the cockle, att the verie time that he resided att Padua, and hauing finished his three bookes of sermons vpon the sondayes and the Quarantine or sermons of Lent, and the booke of the sermons of Sondayes full of verie deep subtilitie and morall doctrine, which he had vndertaken and accomplished to satisfie his holinesse and the Guardian of Hostie, he began to feele that God intended to call him vnto him,

him, and by signes and miracles to demonstrate the merittes of his most faithfull seruant, wherein the people had such confidence, that who-soeuer could haue a bitt of his habit, held himselfe happy, and kept it carefully as a precious holy relique.

Of his last sicknes, his prophesie of his future glory, his vision of God, and his death.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

THis lent being ended, S. Antony desiring to repose himselfe a litle, retired to S. Peters' felde a place appertayning to a gentleman of Padua, called Tise, one that was exceedingly affected vnto him, this place was neere to the Couent of the Frere Minors, which this gentleman in manner alone mayntayned. Now it may well be imagined with what countenance he entertayned the S. doubtes as if he had bin an Angel of Paradise sent vnto him by almighty God: vnderstanding his intention, he caused to be made him three celles of o-zier, one for himselfe, and the other two for Brother Lucas, and Br. Roger his companions and familiers. He remayned not long there till he felt himselfe assaulted with a great feeblenes that daily augmented, but thincking to ease himselfe by trauaile, he went to the next couent of Frere Minors, where his infirmitie did oppresse and vterly ouercome him. There did God reueale vnto him, that, he should soone dye, and what glory he should haue both in heauen, and on earth. Wherefore beholding and considering the amenity and good aire of the plaine, and scituation of Padua, that did neighbour the place where he was, tourning towards his companion, he vttered these wordes: this plaine shall shortly be illustrated and honoured with great glory; as in deed it hath bin from after his death till this present, yea more then he foretold, in regard of the great confluence of people that haue and daily doe resort thither to visitt and honour his holy reliques. And doubtes, this city may be tearmed happy and glorious, hauing in it such a treasure, that hath not enriched only it, but all the world, with singuler gifts and graces obtayned of God by the merittes of this glorious S. Now the S. foreseeing that his houre drew neere, he told Br. Roger, that if in case he should dye of that infirmity he would not be troublesome & chargeable to the Couent where he then was: and therefore prayed him to gett him conducted to the Couent of the Virgin Mary att Padua, where the Frere Minors were; which the Religious approving, he layd him on a wagon, to the great discontentment of all the Religious of that oratory: And as they conducted him to the Citty, they mett a deere freind

Freind of his in the way, who knowing whither he way carryed, caused him to change his purpose and perswaded him to goe to a Monastery out of the Citty called Arcele, alleadgeing that the visitations he should haue att Padua would be very troublefome vnto him. Being then arriued att Arcele, and hauing there receaued all the sacraments, God speedily called him; for hauing with his Religious said the seauen Psalmes, and alone that worthy hymne: *O gloriosa Domina*, as the glorious virgin Mother had alwayes in his life bin very gracious vnto him: so for his comfort & defence he saw her att his death: then a litle after he saw her beloued sonne, whome very attentiuely beholding, and demaunding of Br. Roger whome he saw, I see, answered he, my Lord IESVS CHRIST. Wherto he added fower other wordes, for the comfort and edification of his Religious: after that he reposed and was halfe an hower in contemplation, and then yelded his soule to God. He seemed to sleep, and presently his flesh, that before was vnpleasing to behold, as well in regard of his abstinence, as his discipline, which had made it withered and wan, became so white, cleare, and bright, that it seemed rather his glorious, then mortall body. He died the yeare 1231. the 13. day of Iune being Friday, the 36. yeare of his age, wherof he had spent fiteene in his Fathers house, two in the monasterie of S. Vincent att Lisbon, nine att S. Crofse of Conimbria, and about ten in the Order of S. Francis, where he liued very famous, in his life, doctrine, and miracles,

The death of S. Antony & the chaung of his flesh.

How he appeared to the Abbot of Vercelles.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

WItchin the very houre of his departure, he sodenly appeared in the chamber of the Abbot of Vercelles, sometime his master and Gouvernour, as if he had priuately entred, & told him that he had left his residence and was retiring into his contry: which said, he stroake him with his hand vnder the chinne, as if he would dandle him, and so cured him of a disease which he had there, then vanished as if he had gone out att the chamber dore: but the Abbot following him, could not finde him, and enquiring of his familie if they had seene him, they answered, no. Att length sending to his Conuent, and missing him there, he began to vnderstand that his contry whither he was going was not Portugall, but Paradis, and that he dyed att the same instant.

Yyy

of

*Of a great mirache, wherby the death of saint Antony was discovered,
and of the disension that arose about
his sepulture.*

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

After the decease of S. Antony, the Religious resolved to conceale it till they had determined how to dispose of his bodie, so to auoyd the tumult of the people. But God did manifest it, by the voices of children, that went by troupes, crying throughe the Cittie: Our Father Saint Antonie is dead: which induced manie Burgesses to goe to the monasterie of Arcele, where they vnderstood the truth: and hauing found him dead, they presently placed many armed men, to guard the body, and to hinder the transporting therof. Then the Frere Minors of the monasterie of Padua also hastened incontinentlie thither, accompanied with manie honorable personnes of the Cittie, and required the body, as appertayning vnto them; considering that the saint in his life time had declared his intention, which was, to be interred in their Couent, which they made apparant. There were also other Competitors: which were, they that dwelt on the other side of the bridge, who perceauing that the Oratorie of Arcele was not secure, and that there might be disorder, endeououred by force to take away the holy body, to carry it to a monasterie of Religious women, neere therunto: and the controuerisie grew to such a head, that they were readie to fight, when as a third party and such as were newters there present, laboured to accord them, with condition to expect, the comming of the minister Prouinciall, who should determine the cause. Notwithstanding, the impatient people, could not expect, but would haue the holie bodie carryed into the Cittie: and to that effect thrice assaulted the Monasterie to haue the gates opened for transporting therof: but att each time they remayned att the gate as blinded and halfe benumbed, without any power or abilitie. For which cause (as also in regard that it was feared the bodie might begin to sauour, by reason of the great heate that then was) he was taken from off his discovered coffin, and putt in a square chest vnder ground, which did so mutine the people who supposed he had bin vtterlie taken from that place, that they ran with their swordes in their handes, euen to the celles of the Religious, whence they would not depart till the holie bodye was shewen them, which appeased them. Four dayes.

dayes after his death, the Prouinciall arriued, who was of opinion (with whome ioyned the bishopp) that he should be interred in the said Couent in the Cittie according to his owne ordonance in his life time. To this effect the Bishop caused a very solemne procesion to be made, and the Gouvernour of the Cittie sent a company of foot men to guard a new bridge which he had caused expreslie to be made of boates: but vnderstanding that the inhabitâtes of the other side the bridge were resolu'd by force of armes to surprise the holie body, which by right they could not challenge, and that they had already broken the bridge of boates, he proclaimed by sound of trompett, that no man nor woman vpon paine of death should stirre out of their lodgeing, and banished from that contrie and territory, the principall heades of this conspiracie, and by this meane freed all the Religious of both sex in Padua from feare; for they were extremelie afflicted, and accused themselues, imputing the same to arriue for their offences: wherefore they besought our Lord IESVS CHRIST, to deliuer them from this affliction, which also had put the whole city into a great tumult. So the glorious body of S. Antony was transported to the said Couent of Padua, where it was interred in a sepulcher newly and miraculously discovered, the fift day after his death.

Of the resolution of his canonization, and of certaine miracles there wrought.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

TO speake the truth the dissention aforesaid was not without cause, considering that they contested about so precious a treasure: it is also to be considered how iustly the Paduans possessed this holy body, sith they hazarded their life for it, before it wrought any miracles; as if each of them had bin assured of the great number of miracles which God would worck by it, as he began that verie day, making this pacification to appeare so much more pleasing, and this treasure more deere and gratefull, as the contention had bin greiuous, by meanes of the recouerie of all the diseased that onlie touched his sepulcher, yea of those that, vnable to come to his sepulcher, or into the Church, inuocated his holy name without. This so notable and unexpected successe, spreading incontinentlie ouer all the neighbour places, the Bishop of Padua vnable to retaine the deuotiō of the people, that publicly honoured him according to his merittes; he sent embassadours to Rome in his

Yyy 2 name

A Cardinal opposing against the canonization of the S. God inspired him to change his opinion.

All the belles of Lisbon did ring of themselves.

name and the Paduans, to beseech the Pope to canonise this S. which God had bestowed on them. They being graciously entertayned and heard, together with the examen made by order of the said Bishop, and an other by the deputies of his holinesse, who were an Abbot of S. Benedict, and a Dominican Prior, vpon the life, conuersations, and miracles of the S. and finding more then sufficient prooffe, he proposed to the Consistory his canonization att Spoletum, it being not full, but neere a yeare after his death. Wherto there directly opposed him selfe a Cardinall, which caused further proceeding to be deferred, till the day following, but the first night after, the Cardinall had this dreame: It seemed vnto him that his holinesse would consecrate an Altare, and to that end demaunded holy reliques of him. But he not knowing what to giue him, heard a voice that said: Giue him of the new reliques of S. Antony. Wherevpon, this Cardinall awaking, sollicitated the Pope more then any other, to hasten the canonization of the S. as hauing bin by this diuine voice, fully assured of his great merittes. Besides the approbation of the vnder written miracles wrought after his death, nor including those wrought in his life time, he cured nineteene that were lame, fūe of the palse, fūe that were crooked, six blinde, three deafe, three mute, two of the gout: he raised two to life, and cured diuers others of sundry diseases. For which cause, the yeare 1232. on the day of Pentecost he was enrolled by the Pope in the catalogue of Saintes, with great solemnitie. The said Pope composed and sung that worthy anthe-me: O Doctor optime; and ordayned it to be sung in all churches the day of his feast, which was constituted to be yearly the thirteenth of Iune. One the day of his canonization all the belles of his cittie of Lisbon did ring of themselves, to the exceeding contentment of all persones, wherof they knew no cause, but that they felt an inestimable ioy in their hartes: but they vnderstood afterward that their contryman and fellow-cittizen S. Antony, had bin that day canonized.

The bulle of the aforesaid canonization, taken out of the tenth chapter of the sixth booke, and heere more properly placed.

Gregory bishop, seruant of the seruantes of God, to our venerable Brethren, Archbishops, Bishoppes, health and Apostolical benediction. As God saith by the Prophet: I will make you honoured and prayed of all people; and by the sage, he promisseth that the iust shall shine in the presence of God, as the sunne; so it seemeth vnto vs expedient that we also here on earth below, doe prayse the saintes which his diuine Maiestie hath crowned in heauen; and considering withall, that God is knowne and adored principally in them, who

who is praiseworthy and glorious in his Saintes, and that miraculously to manifest his omnipotencie, and his mercy towards our saluation, he euen ennobleth here below by miracles, his faithfull seruantes, with whome he hath concurred to the merit of eternall glory, and this, to confound the obstinacie of many heretikes, and to confirme his church in his holy Catholique, Apostolike and Romane faith, and to expell out of lukewarme hartes, all sloath and negligence, awakening them to good worckes, by these holy examples, and that the hartes of heretikes might be made plyable to belieue by effect, what they seeme not to vnderstand by the holy scriptures; and finally, that all Iewes and Pagans, the vaile of blindnes being taken from before their eyes, may see this transparent light of the omnipotencie of our Redeemer I E S V S C H R I S T, and that they may not alleadge for excuse, that they had no occasion deseruing their conuersion vnto him, and their acknowledgement of him for true God and true man. Wherefore my beloued, we yeld thanckes to this bountifull giuer of all goodnes, if not as we ought, at least as we may, for that it hath pleased him, for confirmation of our holy faith, and the confusion of heretikes, to bestow on vs, holy and famous men in these dayes, who by signes and manifest miracles haue declared, how true, inestimable and indubitable is the faith of the holy Romane Church, sith they who dye therein, so dye in the grace of God, that they glitter, twinkle and shine in the world, as Sunnes in the firmament. Therefore being therein but one faith, and the same, by this diuine and manifest approbation appearing most true, the falshood of all others must be very euident. Of the number of those that haue merited to worck miracles, before and after their death, is the blessed Father S. Antony, of the Order of the Frere Minors, who liuing in this world, was very famous for his great merittes, and liuing now in heauen, he shineth by many miracles which are ordinarily wrought att his sepulcher, wherof we are assured, as well by very authentically worthy actes, as by reuelation of personnes worthy of credit: These two thinges, merittes and miracles, suffice to giue testimony among men of the sanctity of a man, yea they suffice to make vs yeld to honour and inuocate them, as our intercessors vnto God, which two thinges, are taken out of this text of the Gospell: *They going forth preached every where: our lord working* Marc. 16. *withall, and confirming the word with signes that followed.* For this cause we haue giuen order to the abouesaid Bishop, to Br. Giles Iourdain, Priour of the Order of S. Benett, and to Br. Iohn, Priour of S. Augustins, in the monastery of the Iacobins of Padua, that they should make an exact examen, and approued catalogue of the miracles of the said Saint, which we hauing seene to be conformable to that which by our owne

experience we know to be very true touching his life and holy conuersatiō: that it may not seeme we would hinder or deprive him of his praise, being thereunto vrged by the said Bishop of Padua, and the reuerence of the seruantes of God, which so notoriously deserue the same: and by the aduise of our venerable Brethren, the Cardinalls of the holy Roman Church, and of all the Prelates att this present neere vnto vs: we haue enrolled him in the Catalogue of the SS. Wherefore the candell not being sett on the candlesticke but to giue light, we pray and commaund all those to whome the knowledge of these presents shall come that in vertue of this Apostolicall Breuie they induce their subiectes, and procure them solemnly and reuerentlie to keepe and honour his feast, which is the thirteenth of Iune, to the end that God being moued and appealed by his holie prayers, doe giue vs his holie grace in this life, and his glorie in the other. Besides, that the sepulcher of this worthie Confessor, who by the splendour of his miracles beautifieth our holie Church, be, with the honour due vnto it visited and frequented; we trusting in the diuine grace, and in the authoritie of the glorious Apostles saint Peter and saint Paul; we mercifullie remitte and release a yeares penance enioyned them, to all those that truelie confessed and penitent, doe on the day of his feast, and all the octaue of euerie yeare, visit the same. Giuen att Spoletum, the twelfth of Iulie, in the sixt yeare of our Popedom.

How his body was transported into the said church of Padua, then into that where it now is, and wherefore,

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

POpe Alexander the fourth, desiring to deliuer manie Citties of Lombardie, from the cruelty of the Tyran Ezelin, that had vsurped almost all the Venetian territorie, he sent to Venise as his Legat Philip de Fontaine, Bishop of Rauenna, that hauing ouerthrowne a mightie and potent armie, he might asige Padua, where the Tyran had placed a nephew of his, as lieutenant to guard that place faithfullie for him. God determining to end and cease the tyrannie of this cruell Prince, and to deliuer that Cittie by the merittes of saint Antony, the night of his feast. The cittie being in this trouble, the Guardian of the Couent of the Frere Minors, called Brother Bartholomew Corradin, watching att the sepulcher of the Saint in feruent prayers and teares praying for the deliuey of that cittie, he heard a cleare voice that seemed to proceed out of the said

said sepulcher which said vnto him : Brother Bartholomew, feare
 no more, but be comforted and giue thanckes to God : for I pro-
 mise and assure thee, that on my octaue day, this citty shalbe resto-
 red to her former liberty; which came to passe : for Anselmus the
 Gouvernour therof, being terrified by the hand of God, went out
 and fled with all his people, in such sort that the said Apostolicall
 Legat entred in, and restored all thinges to their former splendour,
 liberty and freedome. The said voice was not onlie heard by the
 said Guardian : but also by many Religious of the Couent that wat-
 ched in the said Church, who gaue testimony therof afterward.
 Wherefore the Paduans ordayned that thenceforward the said octa-
 ue day should be solemnised, as the day it selfe of the feast of saint
 Antony, in acknowledgement of that singuler benefitt. Afterward
 they tooke him for a singuler aduocate of their cittie, consecrating
 vnto him the altare of their great church, wherein they placed his
 reliques, and there they celebrated his feast, on which day manie
 worthy miracles were wrought. Padua being thus deliuered, the
 yeare 1259. the Paduans began to build a great and sumptuous
 Church, wherinto were transported his holie reliques the yeare,
 1273. the eue of *Quasi modo*, the Cardinall of Bologna named Guy
 Charles Bishop of Portuensis, legat of his holinesse, with many ce-
 remonies solemnised the said translation. This Cardinall hauing
 bin deliuered from death by saint Antony, was exceeding deuout
 vnto him, and therefore offered vnto him a faire and rich shrine or
 reliquarie of siluer, wherein he putt his holie head. Saint Bona-
 uenture Generall of the Order, was present att his translation, and
 opened the shrine, wherin the glorious bodie of the Sainct had bin
 thirtie yeares, which he found all touned to ashes sauing the ton-
 gue which was verie fresh and vermillion as when it had life,
 which taking in his handes, in presence of all the companie with
 abundance of teares he vttered these wordes: O blessed tongue
 which hast alwayes prayled they God, and hast laboured others
 to doe the like, it verie euidentlie appeareth that thou hast high-
 lie merited before God! then kissing it verie tenderlie, he put
 it againe verie reuerentlie into the said reliquarie. On a certai-
 ne time after, a Generall desired to transport this holie tongue
 from that place; but hauing taken it vp, and thinking to carry
 it away, he could neuer finde the dore where to goe forth, nor
 had he power to carrie it back whence he had taken it; wherefore
 he secretlie hid it in an altare, none perceauing the same, whe-
 re it remayned manie yeares after, till it pleased the Sainct to
 discover it, so that, taking it thence, it was put in a verie
 faire

*A mira-
cle of the
tongue of
S. Anto-
ny.*

faire and rich reliquary of cryftall, where it is euen to this day shewen pure and entier to all deuout Pilgrimes.

How he raised his Nephew that died att Lisbon.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

A Nephew of the sainctes the sōne of his sister, called Paris, played one day att Lisbon, on the sea shoare, with many children his companions, all which entred into a shallop, which for their recreation they lanchd into the sea; but there sodely arose a storme, which rayfing the sea waues, presently ouer-whelmed the shalop: all that were therein saued themselues by swimming except Paris, who being the youngest, could not swimme, but was drowned; which his Father vnderstanding, he prayed the Fishers to search for recouery of his body, to giue it Christian buryall. They more to satisfie him, then in hope to finde him, sought him sometime, and att length God permitted them to finde him, and deliuering him to his Father, the kinred were of opinion to haue him buryed: but his pittifull mother, the sister of S. Antony, hauing good hope of the life of her sonne by the merittes of her brother, would not permitt him to be buryed, and therefore would be continually neere him all the day following and the night after; but the next morning the kinred purposing not to permitt the body any longer vnburyed, because it already exceedingly sauoured, the mother resolutely said and auowed, that if they would bury her child, they should bury her aliuie together with it. Then she made this prayer to S. Antony: O my glorious Brother, if charity moue thee as I belieue it doeth, and if thou be so careful and ready to gratifie them that inuocate thee, yea such as are strangers, I beseech thee to haue compalsion of thy sister, and of thy Nephew, who if thou pleale to restore him life, shall serue God in thy Order, where he shall attaine to age conuenient & competent to that end, if so it please the diuine Maiestie. The successe was admirable, for as soone as she had ended her vow, the child that had bin three dayes dead, arose before all the company, and hauing attained age sufficient, he accomplished the said vow, taking the habit of the Order of his vnckle, wherein he piously perseuered.

Of two other raised from death by Sainct Antonie, and of some others.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

A Queene of Leon in Spaine borne in Portugall, hauing by accident of sicknes lost her daughter of eleuen yeares of age, and hauing heard

heard this foresaid miracle recounted, would not haue her daughter buried, but kept her three dayes without buryall; during which time she deuoutly inuocated the helpe of S. Antony, with a feruent faith, for which she deserued att length to be heard: but the child her daughter being rayfed sayd vnto her: deere Mother, I beseech God to pardon you for hauing troubled me in the celestially glory, where I was amongst the virgins, though it be not for long time: for I am restored to life att the instance of S. Antony but for fiftene dayes: which so succeeded, for fiftene dayes after, she dyed againe.

A princeesse was raised by the meritts of S. Antony.

A gentleman that could haue no children, vowed to the S. that if he would obtaine him one, he would every yeare visitt his sepulcher, and he was heard; but goeing one day to accomplish his vow he left his sonne of seauen yeares old sick in his house, who by litle and litle so recovered health that he went to play with his companions, in a channell where then there was no water, it being bended an other way to water a certaine plaine, but the banke or bay being not strong enough, gaue such way to the violence of the water, that it returned impetuouuslie into the chanell, where it drowned nine children playing there, wherof two being found were presentlie buried. The said gentleman retourning from Padua, of his first friendes that he mett, he demaunded how his sonne did: they vnwilling to deliuer him such vnwelcome newes, answered, they thought he was well, because it was not long since he played thereby with his companions. This poore father passed farther, and came to his house, where he asked for his sonne. His seruantes seemed not to heare him, and endeauoured to diuert him from such demaund: but he said, he would neither eat nor drinck till he had seene him. Which constrayned them to declare vnto him the infortunate disaster of his sonne; which hauing vnderstood he became out of himselfe; but afterwarde by litle and litle recouering his spirittes, he sware and very obstinately protested, that he would neither eat nor drinck till saint Antony had restored him his sonne, which with a very feruent faith expecting, a litle after his sonne entred in where he was with other nine of his companions, that by the merittes of saint Antony had bin saued with him, for which they praysed God in his saint and glorified him with hart and voice. It is found to be recorded that the two other children companions of the foresaid, which were already buried, were also rayfed by the merittes of the S. who had compassion of the clamours that their parentes made vnto him.

In Apulia, in the citty of Monoplia, a child did so vndermine a pitt, neere vnto the Frere Minors, that the earth hauing no support brake downe

ne vpon him, where he was buried, without appearance of any reliefe. His mother vnderſtanding therof, ran inſtantly to the monaſtery of Frere Minors, crying and often reiterating theſe wordes: O S. Antony, reſtore me my child. In meane while they were buſy in taking vp the earth frō the pitt, wherein they found the childe aliue, though much troubled, who was asked how it was poſſible that ſo much earth had not choaked him? He anſweared, that S. Antony had ſtill held his hand vnder his throat, to giue him meanes to breath: which gaue all thoſe preſent occaſion to praiſe and thanck God in his ſainct.

*An other
couered
in earth.*

*Of many miracles wrought againſt ſuch as would not beleue the glory
of the ſainct.*

THE XXXIV. CHAPTER.

A Chaplain belonging to the Biſhop of Padua, hearing the firſt miracles of S. Antony related, would not only not beleue them, but euen did ieſt and ſcoffe at them. But he preſently felt the diuine reuenge; for he was ſtricken with an extreme ſharp and peſtilencious feauer, which did ſo enfeeble him and brought him to that extremitie, that he was in danger of death. Whereupon acknowledging his offence and repenting, the third day of his ſickneſſe, he called his mother, to whome he confeſſed his fault, and proteſted he was exceedingly grieued therat; then he prayed her to goe to the ſepulcher of the S. there to ſeek to obtaine mercie, and in his name to promiſe, that thenceforward in ſteed of incredulity and diſriſion, he would firmelie beleue, publickly preach, and manifeſt vnto him the gloria of this miracle to all the world. It was admirable in a mor- tall inſirmitie, conſider, the mother going thither, ſhe inuocated the Sainct, then made the vow; and in that very inſtant the ſick parry was cured; leaping out of his bed to the great admiration of all that was preſent.

A Chaplain incredulous of the miracles of the S. hauing recourse vnto him in a mortal inſirmitie, was heard.

A certaine old gentleman that had bin an heretike from his infancy, ſetting one day at table, heard many miracles recounted of ſainct Antony, whereatt gibing and reputing all fabulous, he tooke a drinking glaſſe of cryſtall, and threw it out at the windoe, ſaying: If ſainct Antonie can preſerue that glaſſe from breaking, I will henceforward hold him for a ſainct; and the glaſſe being very forcible caſt againſt the ſtones, was miraculoſlie preſerued entier. This heretike ſeeing ſo manifeſt a miracle, was moued, not onlie to beleue that Sainct Antonie was truelie and reallie a Sainct, but was alſo induced to ſoſake his heretic, and abixing it ſincerlie:

to embrace our faith, which he performed.

Diuers persons eating att table, fell into discourse of the miracles of the saint, and after many relations, one of them recounted that of the glasse aforesaid, exceedinglie admiring and wondring therat; another of them that was a companion and scoffer doubting of this miracle, saw withered branches of a vigne, wherof he tooke a handfull and in the other hand a glasse, saying: If Saint Antony would make grapes to grow out of these branches, and that their iuyce and liquor would fill this glasse, I would hold it a miracle, and then would I beeleue the former miracle you recounted: Which he had no sooner spooken, but all the sprigges of the branches which this scoffing fellow held, budded forth leaues, and then very faire grapes, which being crushed together filled the glasse with liquor, and by this meane the vertue of S. Antony was acknowledged and confessed by those that formerlie derided him.

An other seeing withered vigne-branches to beare grapes in an instant and to yeld wine

Saint Antonie was become famous and reuerenced att Padua, for the miracles by him there ordinarilie wrought; wheratt neuerthelesse some heretiques did ordinarilie scoffe and gibe, and one time they purposed publikelie to deride them, and to that end presented themselues att the Church dedicated to the saint: and being before the sepulcher, they began to cry and lament, saying that one of them (who had a hand kirchefe before his eyes, which they had embued with bloud, that it might be thought his eyes were thrust out, according to their crye) had in a quarrell vnfortunately lost both his eyes, and therefore they exhorted the people to pray for this wretched blind man, who of his owne part omitted not to pray to God, and sayned to inuocate the saint cunninglie playing the hypocrite. Now after they had spent about an houre vpon this subiect, the blinde fellow purposed to take off his handkirchefe, to make a shew first that he was cured, as he cryed and protested; that by this fact he might afterwarde inferre, that as often as any miracles were wrought by saint Antony, they were supposed and suborned as that was. But they were much amazed when they saw the two prunelles out of the Imposters eyes, when as they determined and thought to deride the saint, and therefore changing their laughter into teares, and their quibbes and scoffes into prayers, they with such a faith humbled themselues, that att length they obtayned the recouerie of their imposters sight.

An other iestingly faiming to be blind was blind in deed.

An hereticall soldier meeting a poore leaper, that went to the sepulcher of saint Antony to be cured, sayd vnto him: Friend thou loolest thy labour and time, for I assure thee, if saint Antony euer cure thee of thy leprosie, I am content to haue it. The poore Leaper yet omitted not to proceed in his iorney, and being att the sepulcher of

A soldier
had the
leprosy of
a leper, as
he desired
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ing him
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pulcher
of S. An-
tony.

S. Antony he fell a sleepe. The S. appeared vnto him in a dreame and sayd: goe and carry thy clappers to the soldier that thou mettest in the way for he hath thy leproisie as he said, and bid him vse them. So being awaked, and finding himselfe perfectly cured he caried his clapper by commandement of the S. to the soldier, whome he found full of leprosie from the head to the foot: for which he very bitterly lamented, and repēting what he had done vowing and recommending himselfe to the S. he desired to be heard, hauing learned by experience, how great is the vertue of the Sainctes of God.

Of many other miracles, and of the Breefe of S. Antony against the Devils, which remained in the handes of the King of Portugall.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

A soldier
by the
merits of
S. Anto-
ny being
cured of
a deadly
hurt
thinc-
king to
be reuen-
ged had
his wound
again.
Vowes
must be
accom-
plished.
One deaf
and dumme
cured by
the said
S.

IN a combatt that happened betweene two soldiers, one of them was so strangely hurt in one arme, that speaking humanely it was incurable, at least, sauing his life, he could not auoyd a perpetuall mayne. Now recommending himselfe to S. Antony he was presently cured, the wound being so closed, it as if he had neuer bin hurt. But as is said of the wicked, hauing past and escaped the danger they scoffe at the S. so the soldier began to consider by what meanes he might be reuenged, and diuers times discoursing therof with himselfe, the night before this lewd designe, the said wound came into his arme as before: the S. teaching him and all others, that the graces and fauours of God are not to be abused against his seruice, that is, employed in any thing which he forbiddeth, and is not pleasing vnto him, as to the detriment of ones neighbour.

A child of Padua called Henry, hauing a swelling in his neck, vowed to the S. and was immediatly cured: but his mother that caused him to vow not regarding to fulfill it, the infirmity returned, yet repenting and accomplishing the vow, her sonne was cured againe.

An Abbot hauing great compasion of his seruant, that was deafe & dumme, vowed in his behalfe to S. Antony, that if he would please to cure him, he would employ him all his life in the seruice of his Church; he was instantly cured, for which he was not vngratefull: for he employed him in his church all the dayes of his life in the City of Sautaren in the kingdome of Portugall, in the raigne of Don Donis.

There was a poore woman, who though she were very deuout to S. Antony, yet being sinfull, the deuill sometimes possessed her and tempted her to destroy her selfe, perswading her that she could neuer satisfie God, for the many finnes she had committed but by voluntary killing her selfe;

OF THE FRIER MINORS LIB. V. for

to this false imagination, he added a false vision; for the deuill appeared vnto her in forme of a crucifix, telling her that for the loue she bore him he would saue her, but she could hardly satisfie for her sinnes vnlesse she would voluntary murder her selfe; to which purpose he counsailed her to goe that very houre to the riuer Tage, and there to drowne her selfe, and promised her to receaue her att the instant into his glory. This woman hauing had this vision, concealed it sometime in her hart; now it happened, that when her husband exceedingly checked and rebuked her, among other iniuries calling her possessed with a deuill; she partly in fury, and dispaire procured her by her husband, and partly vrged by the deuill by remembrance of the said vision, resolved to drowne her selfe, and with that intention departed from her house; but S. Antony would not permit such an act, so vnworthy of a Christian to be perpetrated, especially on such a day, it being on the celebration of his feast: for this miserable woman passing before his Church, was inspired to enter into it: *S. Antony himselfe* which she did, and the very deuoutly prayed the S. that he would vouchsafe to reueale vnto her, if it were possible, whither it were the will of *dered a* God she should drowne her selfe or not: hauing ended her prayer, she slept a sweet sleep and so light, that she heard the voice of the Saint *woman from* which in her dreame said vnto her: looke vpon thy bosome and when *drown'd* thou hast read the writing thou findest there, thou shalt be cured. *her selfe.* The woman presently awaking found on her bosome a bitt of parchment, wherein was written in letters of Gold: *Ecce crucem Domini, fugite partes diuersas; vicit leo, de tribu Iuda: Alleluia: Alleluia:* As soone as she had read the same, she was entierlie freed of her temptation.

The king of Portugall Don Donis, hauing bin aduertised of this great miracle, by the husband of the woman, demaunded the said Breefe or writing, which was giuen him: but it was strange, this woman not hauing her writing, the deuill began presently to vex her: but hauing no meanes to demaund it againe of the king, who had put it amongst his reliques (hauing wrought many miracles by this breefe) the husband was aduised to request a copy therof, which by meane of some Religious, he obtained, which hauing deliuered to his wife, she was all the rest of her dayes freed from the said temptation, liuing securely the space of twenty yeares.

How he deliuered from death the Princesse of Portugall. Taken out of the sixteenth chapter of the tenth booke, so be more properly put in this place.

THe princesse, Lady Aldoucia daughter of the king of Portugall and of queene Teresa, by a very extreame and dangerous infirmi-

ty that tormented her, approaching to her death, her mother had recourse vnto saint Antony, to whome she was much deuoted, most affectionately recommending her daughter vnto him, and praying him to remember that he was borne in that kingdome, and that as he had cured, saued, and raysed so many in Italy, he would please also to deliuer her daughter from that danger of death. Att that very instant, so strong and violent a fitt of the feauer did assault the sick Princeesse, that euery one esteemed it her last agony. But then did the Saint appeare vnto her, and said: daughter, God hath sent me to thee for latisfaction of the frequent prayers of thy mother, to putt it to the election of thy will, either to goe now with me to Paradise, or for consolation of thy mother to continue longer in the world. The Princeesse hauing choosen the second; saint Antony deliuered her his girdle saying: Well, kisse this Cord: which she taking in her handes, and as she thought holding it fast, she cryed to her mother, Madame, Madame, come see the glorious saint Antony whome I hold by his girdle, which he hath deliuered me to kisse therby to be cured: she comming and not seeing the Saint at all, found her daughter perfectly well; wherefore she diuulged this miracle in the City of Allenquor, where this happened, in the Church of the Frere Minors, whither she with all her Court repayed to giue thanckes to God and to his holy seruant.

Of certaine other miracles of saint Antony

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

A Poore man being seduced by an Inchaunter, that promised to procure him an instinct to know what soeuer he desired, entred with him into a circle where in an instar he saw appeare a great number of deuils, who perceauing him to be utterly amazed and terrified, did rent out his eyes and tongue, and then vanished. This miserable fellow hastened directly to the Church of S. Antony, where repenting to haue consented to the Magician, he inuocated with his hart, not hauing the vse of his voice, his assistance. And vpon these his humble prayers, in the time of high masse, as the Preist sung. *Gloria in excelsis, Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*, his two eyes were miraculously restored him, which being knowne, all the City of Padua was full of the bruit, each one desiring to see him. Many of the more ancient and noble of the city held it conuenient, that all the people there present should ioyne themselves in prayer that it might please God to accompany this first miracle with a second, in restoring his speech: To this effect they

A blind man had his sight and spech restored by the meritts of the S.

they all fell on their knees & offered their prayers, the Masse alwayes continuing: when the *Agnus Dei* was sung, his tongue was also restored, wherby he began with a loud voice to prayse God and his S.

A Religious woman of the Order of saint Clare, hauing heard preached the rigour of the paines of Purgatory, conceaued such a terror of goeing thither, that she prayed almighty God to graunt her to suffer her Purgatory in this world, and so long continued in prayer that att length God heard her. But being vnable anylong time to support so rigorous and insupportable tormentes, she discouered the cause of her afflictions to the other Religious, whome she prayed to make supplication to God by the merittes of saint Antony, that he would please to moderate those so bitter tormentes which she endured: and so all the Religious with such deuotion and humility applied themselves to prayer, that by the merittes of S. Antony she was eased therof, & thenceforward she was no more so rash as to tempt God; but entierly resigned herselfe to the will of his diuine maiesty, casting herselfe absolutely into his disposition.

*A Religious vn-
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The Religious Br. Bernardine of Parma, by a violent catarre in his throat became dumme, for cure wherof were applyed all about his neck burning cauters, all which nothing auayled: so that he became so feeble that putting to him a litle waxe candle lighted, he could not with his breath blow it out: wherfore his death and stifling being feared, he was carryed to Padua, where the feast of S. Antony was celebrated, to visit his sepulcher. There was then a great concourse of people, where in publike presence he offered his prayer, shedding abundance of teares: then he began to spett and to auoyd such a quantity of filthy and loathsome matter, that the beholders could no longer endure it, their hartes so arrising att the sight of such insupportable stufte: and withall he was cured of the catarre and recouered his speech, for which he hartely prayfed God and his saint.

The sonne of a poore woman about twety monthes old called Thomasin, dwelling neere the said Church, fell one day vnaduisedly into a pond full of water with his head downeward, and was carryed home dead. His mother full of desolation, hastened with great faith to the sepulcher of the saint, before which she fell on her knees, beseeching him with all her soule to restore her child to life: and promising euery yeare, though she were needy, to giue an almose to the poore in his honour, of the quantity of her sonnes weight in wheat: who was speedily restored to life to the exceeding amazement of all that were present, who together with the mother gaue thanckes to God for the same.

These miracles of S. Antony are approued to be very authentically
togeth-

together with three or fower which he wrought with S. Francis, in whose life we haue inserted them, where by the vse of the table they may be easly found, for which miracles & many other, generally knowne, may truly be said: *Mirabilis est Deus in sanctis suis: Amen.*

The end of the Fift booke of the second part of the first volume, of the Chronicles of the Frere Minors.



THE SIXT BOOKE
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS,

WHEREIN ARE CONTAINED THE LIVES OF
*twenty particuler and speciall Disciples of the Seraphi-
call F. S. Francis, Translated by the aforesaid.*

The life of Br. Bernard Quintauall, the eldest spirituall child
of Sainct Francis.

Of the conuersion of Br. Bernard Quintauall, and of his pouerty.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



ROther Bernard Quintauall, was borne att Alsifium, of the most noble family therin, where hauing considered the strangenes of life of S. Francis, his admirable contempt of worldly commodities, his vnchangeable assurance, his inuincible constancie in supporting iniuries, and his exceeding patiēce, in enduring the troubles and laboures of this life, yea seeming dailie more and more to conceaue greater contentment therin; He esteemed all this could not proceed but by the will of God: which he experienced, as hath bin amplie declared in the eight chapter of the first booke and first volume, where
his

his conuerſion is related at large. Hauing then renounced the world, and ſold all he had in the marckett place of Alsifium, and giuen the price to the poore and beggers of IESVS CHRIST, following S. Francis, he deſerued to be his eldeſt child, as well in time as perfection; for by ſpeciall priuiledge he had the grace to be a true loue of pouerty. And alſo S. Francis ſometimes would ſay, that Br. Bernard had founded his Order, ſelling his ſubſtance to giue to the poore, euen to his very apparell wherwith he was cloathed, ſo that his firſt Religious habitt was made of almoſe: then being thus naked, he offered and caſt himſelfe into the armes of IESVS CHRIST crucified naked, whome he imitated euen to his death. God alſo by a particuler prerogatiue beſtowed on him, a ioyfull patience which merueilloſly ſhined in him, and particulerlie in thoſe iornes he performed vpon obedience, edifying his neighbour, and exerciſing himſelfe in vertues.

How Br. Bernard by the vertue of patience built a monaſtery at Bologna, and ſome others in Lombardy.

THE II. CHAPTER.

After the firſt confirmation of the Order by Pope Innocent the third, and hauing receaued the precept of penitence, Brother Bernard was ſent by ſainct Francis to Bologna, to ediſie the people with examples of piety. Being in that Citty, the Children ſeeing him in ſo ſimple a habitt and ſo different from other Religious, they followed him in the ſtreets, crying after him, reproaching him, reuiling him, and vſing him as a foole: which he endured with immoueable patience and contentment; yea to procure himſelfe the greateſt diſgrace and diſhonour for the loue of IESVS CHRIST, who was ſo much contemned for vs, he would frequent thoſe places where was the greateſt reſort of people, and there the idle and loytering companions ſcoffed at him, and ſlouted him as a foole. But the patient and obediẽte ſeruãt of God, did neither reſiſt nor complaine, but ſhewed a pleaſing and ioyfull contenance, contenting himſelfe for his food with a bitt of bread giuen him for the loue of God, and thus he continued for certaine dayes, till it pleaſed our Lord, to declare him to be his ſeruãt, which by this meanes came to paſſe. One of the nobleſt of the Citty who then was the Iudge, ſeeing and conſidering the life of this poore Religious, ſayed in himſelfe, this man thus contemned, muſt needes be ſome holy perſonage in regard of his extraordinary patience. And therefore he called him vnto him, and hauing demaunded what he was, and whence he came, Brother Bernard drew out of his boſome the

*Patience
of Br.*

Bernard.

Euangelicall rule which saint Francis had giuen him, and which he had written no lesse in his hart then in that paper: and without vsing any other wordes deliuered it vnto him. The iudge hauing seene the same, was stricken into an amazement, and turning towards many that were flocked thither to heare the Religious discourse: he sayd: This rule doubtlesse teacheth the most strict and rigorous religious life that is in the Church; and in deed this man and all his companions that lead this life, represent vnto vs the Apostolicall Colledge, and therefore are worthy of very great honour. This being said, he conducted Brother Bernard to his house, with such ioy and contentment as if he had bin an Angell of heauen. A litle after, att his owne expences he built for him and his companions, a Couent without the cittie but very neere the walles as most commodious for them. He liued and dyed as a deuout Brother of the Order. In this sort was Brother Bernard the first that began the Couent att Bologna, which he did not seeke to build sumptuouslie and found with much rentes and possessions, but with the examples of a most profound humility and patience; he built vpon the firme rocke of IESVS CHRIST, who is our true and liuely foundation. Br. Bernard being then thus seated att Bologna, the people by litle and litle knowing his sanctity, beganne to respect him and desirouslie to heare his wordes, and to admitt his Counsailes, in such sort that in a short space, many did not only forsake their disordered life, but also left the world, becoming Frere Minors in the said monastery. To be short, he was generally respected of all as a saint, each one desired to see him, and to kille that habitt which formerlie they misprised; but he, as the true and humble discipule of Euangelicall humilitie, shunning these vaine honours, retourned to the holie Father saint Francis, whome he besought to send him some other where: wherein the saint was willing to gratifie him, and sent him into Lombardie, where he edified the people with admirable vertue, and erected many monasteries, and recouered an infinite number of soules that resolued to follow the life and profession of the gospel of IESVS CHRIST.

Of the pilgrimage of Brother Bernard to S. Iames in Galicia, and what happened to him there.

THE III. CHAPTER.

WHen the holy Father S. Francis went into Spaine to visit the Church of saint Iames in Galicia, he tooke Br. Bernard and certaine other of his companions with him. They found.

found in their iorney a poore sicke personne in a place very miserable and discomfortable, and vtterly abandoned; there they remayned certaine dayes to haue care of him, serue and comfort him. But saint Francis knowing his sicknesse would be of long continuance, leste Brother Bernard to attend him, and proceeded on his pilgrimage, whence retourning he found the sick man recovered, and tooke Brother Bernard back with him into Italie, whence shortly after he demaunded leaue of him to visite the Apostle Saint Iames in Galicia, not hauing opportunitie to goe with him the other time; and hauing accomplished his iust desire, att his retourne he came to a riuer which, by reason of the swiftnes and violence of the current which was very deepe, he could not wade ouer, wherefore he was enforced to stay att the side therof, where a litle after, an Angell in very actiue manner appeared vnto him, and saluted him in Italian: Which Brother Bernard admiring, asked him if he came from Italie, or whence he was: wherto he answered, that he came from our Lady of Angels, where he had bin to admonish Br. Helias of his temerity in desiring to make a new rule, and that he had rudely shutt the gate vpon him, for which God would punish him. Which said, he easily conducted Br. Bernard to the other side of the riuer, and then incontinentlie vanished, leauing Br. Bernard exceedingly comforted, who gaue thanckes to God for hauing visited and assisted him by his Angell. Being att Alsifum he recounted to the holy Father S. Francis and others, what the Angell had told him of Brother Helias: by which meane it was knowne that he who was att the dore of the Couent of our Lady of Angels, and had spoaken to Brother Helyas (as hath bin related in the 100. chapter of the first booke) was sent of God, to propose vnto him the question there sett downe, to giue him occasion of amendement.

How Brother Bernard receaued of almighty God the grace of extaticall contemplation and of the effectes therof, together With his abstinence.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

THis holy Father oftentimes retyred himselfe from the workes and labour of the actiue life (wherein he spent a good part of his time for the saluation of soules) to the repose of the contemplatiue life, whereby he obtained of God such a sublimitie of spirit and cleannesse of vnderstandinge, that the deepest learned diuines repayed vnto him, to demaunde solution of

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diffi-

difficult and obscure passages of the holy scripture: It seemed that his soule conuersed continually in heauen. Sometimes he went ouer the mountaines entierly transported in God, rauished as a propheticall spiritt in manifest signe of his continuall mentall eleuation. Fifteene yeares before his death, as he was spirituallly in heauen, he had also his countenance euer lifted very high: in his iornyes, when he began to feele the force of spirituall extasie, he would bid his companion to expect a while: then would turne out of the way and seeke some tree against which to rest, and so held himselfe firme and stable, that his spiritt might not wander diuers wayes, till the extasie were ended. He one time said to that great contemplatiue Brother Giles, that he made himselfe but halfe a man, remayning as a woman, shut vp in his Cell, and not going abroad to teach men the right way of their saluation. Brother Giles answered him: O Brother, it is not permitted to all men to eat and flye as swallowes, as it is to you, who going, resting, not stirring, and running in any place whatsoeuer, doe alwayes tast the extaticall and diuine consolation. For which cause saint Francis tooke great contentment to discourse with him of matters concerning God, so that, to that effect, they were sometimes found together in a wood, both rapt in extasie, where they remayned in that manner a whole night together. As he one day heard Masse in the quier, he was so rauished in spiritt, that he remayned till the ninth hower immouable and insensible, with his eyes fixed towardes heauen. When he returned to himselfe he seemed vtterly amazed, and turning to the other Religious he cryed out vnto them: My Brethren, is there any man, how soeuer great, rich and noble he may be, that will not esteeme it easy to carry a sack full of dung, ordure, and carrion, if therefore he be promised a pallace full of gold? herby intending to signify the immensue treasure which God reserueth for those that are contrite in heart. But it is a thing worthy of especiall note in him, that in fifteene yeares of his spirituall seruour, he neuer more then halfe satisfied his appetite, though he did eat indifferently of euery permissible thing sett before him: whervpon he would say, that it cannot be called abstinence for a man to forbear that which he tasteth not, seeing that this vertue fighteth against the tast of that which pleaseth and seemeth good vnto him: but because few attaine to that perfection, it is best to shunne the occasions.

*What is
to be done
to gaine
Paradise.*

Hon.

How this worthy seruant of God was tryed and exercised in patience and endurance of temptations.

THE V. CHAPTER.

BEcause almighty hath God oftē accustomed to proue his faithfull seruantes by a restraint of spirituall consolation, and of his sweet presence, he oftentimes afflicted him in this kinde: but afterwarde considering his notable constancie, he could not but comfort him. He once past eyght dayes, without tasting any sweetnesses of diuine conuersation: that time by reason of his exceeding loue to almighty God; seemed vnto him eight yeares: he kept himselfe solitary, and verie pensiue, continually praying God with much seruour, to restore vnto him the consolation he desired, and the ioy which by his presence he receaued. Herevpon, there instantly appeared in the ayre, a hand bended, and as it were in action of striking a viose, whence he felt so pleasing and delighefull a harmony, that it filled his soule interiorly with such and so excellent a sweetness, that if the sound had longer endured, it had, (as to him seemed) dissolued his soule from his bodye. Almighty God tryed him also, and exercised him exceedingly; by terrible and strange temptations: which was reuealed in prayer to the holy Father saint Francis; who recommending him most affectionately to IESVS CHRIST, that he would please to assise him with his grace, and to giue him victory against such potent and mortall enemies, he heard a voice from heauen that said: Feare not, for the temptations which assault Brother Bernard, are giuen him for exercise and for a crowne, and att length he shall haue the victory ouer all his enemies. Besides, know that Brother Bernard is one of the elect of the table of our Lord. Saint Francis was so comforted with this voice, that he could not satisfie himselfe with giuing thanckes to God: and thenceforth euer loued Brother Bernard better. He related all to his companions, adding that God would deliuer Brother Bernard of all his temptations; and before his death, would so settle his spirit in peace, that all the Religious which should behold him should prayse God for it, and that from heere below he should ascend to IESVS CHRIST, in that peace and spirituall tranquillity; which so came to passe.

The sixt chapter is put in the middest of the 67. chapter of the tenth booke, with this title: How saint Francis blessed Brother Bernard miraculously, in imitation of the Patriarch Iacob. That place being more proper unto it.

Of the Zeale of Religion, and the charity which Brother Bernard had towards the sicke.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe glorious Brother Bernard was so zealous of his rule and profelsion, that he sharply reprehended euery delinquent in that respect of what soeuer degree of superiority he might be: as, hauing one day seene Brother Helias Generall, on a very lusty, faire, and fatt mule, he came behinde him, and with a great zeale reprehending him, said: Brother Generall this beast wheron you ride, is very great and fatt, wheras you know our rule doth not permitt the same: then laying his hand on the rumpe of the mule, he repeated the same wordes, adding also many other. An other time, knowing that he was retired into his chamber, where with many other Religious he did seat meates delicately dressed, he was much troubled with the euill example of such remissnesse, wherfore he arose from the table of the refectory, taking his earthen dish in one hand, and his cup in the other, and went to the chamber of the Generall, ouer against whome he late downe att the table, and sayd: Brother I intend to eat with you this good meat, which is the almose of the poore of our Lord. Brother Helias with these wordes was not a litle troubled and confounded, yet he durst not reply a word, knowing that he was esteemed of the Religious for a very holy man, and as such was generally reuerenced and honoured. This good Religious Brother Bernard, was also very charitable towards the sick. A Religious one day demanding of him why he gaue so much to a sick Religious person to eat, he answered: Brother, I doe it, thereby to dilchARGE on my part what is requisite, and what charity commandeth me: you may well iudge that the sicke eateth but according to his necessity.

He twice
reprehended the
Generall
of his
Order.

of

Of the death of the glorious Brother Bernard.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

WHen it pleased God to call his seruant Brother Bernard out of this terrestriall prison, to his celestiaall kingdome, he was assaulted with a violent disease, in which notwithstanding he continued so intentiue in God, that he would not endure to heare spoaken or to thinck of any other thing. Vpon this occasion when sometimes the Religious that had care of him, putt vinegar with rose water to his nose, or therwith washed his wrestes to recomfort him, knowing that the same did withdraw him from his diuine meditations, he would not permitt it to be applyed vnto him. If it chaunced that by ach of his head, or other occasion, some ill cogitation that was not of God troubled his minde, reflecting instantly on him selfe, he would forcible shake his head to expell and driue it away. And that he might haue no occasion to be separated one only moment from God, vpon the necessities of his body, he resigned all his will, for the care of seconde causes and worldly respectes, into the handes of his Infirmarian, vsing vnto him these wordes: My beloued brother, I will no more thincke on the necessities of this body, I referre the care therof to you; wherfore vse it as you shall thinck requisit, I will take whatsoeuer you shall prepare me: If you giue me nothing, I will thinck of nothinge. Now because, after the death of saint Francis all the Religious did reuerence Brother Bernard, as their Father, knowing this to be his last sicknes, and that his death was neere, they for many respectes came to visitt him: and among others, that worthy contemplatiue Br. Giles, who finding him weakened to so low an estate, said vnto him: *Sursu corda*, Brother, *Sursu corda*. Brother Bernard att these wordes exceedingly reioyced, and awakening his spiritt, answered: *Habemus ad Dominum*: and willed one of the Religious to prepare some conuenient place for Br. Giles, that he might remaine neere vnto, during the time he had yet to liue, that he might applie himselfe to the excelses of contemplation: his sicknesse encreasing, he would not be without a Preist, & att euery moment that anything occurred to his memory worthy of cōfession, he hūbly acknowledged it to his Cōfessour. The last day of his sicknes whē something was presented to him to eat, he called all the Religious and prayed the to eat with him, saying: My Brethren I beseech you to celebrate with me this my last hower: and then discovered vnto them such a seruour of charity and deuotion, that many Religious admiring it, confessed that

God assisteth in tribulations.

Admirable consolation att the point of death.
S. 102. 13.

albeit they esteemed him a saint, yet they neuer so much experienced the excellencie of his vertue and sanctity as att that time. After he had receaued the sacrament of extreme vnction, he settled himselfe decently, and said to all his Religious: My Brethren, I beseech you for euer to remember this my houre, wherto you must all come in your degree. And I confesse and assure you that I haue neuer bin a Frere Minor, but in temptations; considering that in them I haue euer found God to assist me: and now I feele such a contentment, that I would not haue omitted to serue God for a thousand such worldes as this. Now I accuse my selfe to God and you, of all the offences I haue committed: and in this my last houre doe beseech you to loue one an other, for this shalbe a signe wherby you shalbe knowne to be disciples of IESVS CHRIST. After such and the like wordes, his face became so ioyfull and cleare, that they all admired: and in that ioy his blessed soule passed from this vale of miseries, to the repose of glory: his flesh continued so cleare, tender and plumme, as that of a sucking child, and his countenance appeared so liuely, as that the Religious could not satisfie themselues with contemplating (as in a shadow) the great splendour which his soule was to receaue in heauen: att length he was solemnly entered in the Couent of S. Francis att Alsifium neere vnto the sepulcher of the holy Father, where were present a great assembly of people.

How the glory of Br. Bernard was reuealed to Br. Leo, and Br. Ruffin.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

Br. Bernard always iudged in the best sense.

THe glory which God had ordayned for him was in this man-
neareuealed to two Religious the companions of S. Francis, att
the same instant that he dyed: Br. Leo, and Br. Ruffinus lay sick
in a village neere to Portiuncula, where in one night they saw appeare
vnto them a great nomber of Frere Minors goeing in procesion, among
whome they saw one more note-worthy then the rest, out of whose
eyes issued beames more glittering then the sunne so that they could no
longer hold their eyes fixed on him. They asked one of the Religious
whither they went, and they answered that they were come to seeke
a soule that should accompany Br. Bernard to glorie, who att that very
hower was departed this mortall life, and that was he, out of whose
eyes they saw so much light proceed: which God permitted, because he
always iudged well of his neighbour, & whē he saw any poore people
in ragged & patched cloathes, he would say to himselfe: these obserue po-
uerty better thē thee Br. Bernard, & iudged as though they had promi-
sed to obserue holy pouerty. When he saw men richly and sumptuously
atti-

attired, he would say with great compunction of his soule: It may very well be that these gentlemen weare vnder that precious habitt, some hairecloth, wherby they weaken, mortifie and chaſtice their fleſh: and exteriorly appearing to be full of vanity, they ſhunne vaine glory: which thou, Br. Bernard, performeſt not with thy poore patched habitt, though thou be generally eſteemed a great penitent. And this glory alſo is giuen him becauſe what ſoeuer good he ſaw in the creatures, the ſame hereferred to the Creatour, and gaue him thanckes for it. Which ſayd, the proceſſion diſappeared.

The life of Br. Ruffinus, companion of S. Francis.

Of the vertues in generall and ſanctitie of Brother Ruffinus, by the reſtimonie of Saint Francis.

THE X. CHAPTER.

GOd adorned and enriched the firſt Frere Minors, with the apparant and excellent vertues of Br. Ruffinus, as a ſhining rainebow through the cloudes with the beautifull variety of faire coulours, and as a vermillian roſe, for his feruent charity, and as a white lilly for his purity, yelding a moſt pleaſing ſauour to the Church of God. This bleſſed Br. Ruffinus, was borne at Alſifium, of a very noble family, and nere of kinred to the glorious S. Clare. He was conuerted to God by the examples and documentes of the holy F. S. Francis, he tooke the habitt of the Frere Minors, and was profeſſed for ſuch, as is formerly recorded in the 17. cha. of the firſt booke and firſt volume: he kept himſelfe a true virgin, & obtained of God a ſinguler grace of contéplation. He was of a gracious & amiable conuerſation among men. As one day he returned frō prayer, he paſſed before S. Francis goeing to his cell, who ſeeing him comming a ſarre off, demaunded of his cōpanions that were about him, what ſoule in this world, was in their opinion moſt pleaſing to his diuine maiesty. They very hūbly anſweared that they knew not, but it ſeemed to thé that his ſoule was more pleaſing to God, thé any other that they knew in the world, by reaſon of the ſinguler graces which he had receaued of his diuine maiesty. But S. Francis thus replyed: My Brethré, I tell you and aduertife you that as for my ſelfe, I am the moſt vile and vnworthie ſervant that God hath in this world, and he hath reuealed vnto me that the ſoule of Br. Ruffinus is one of the three moſt holyeſt in the world, ſo that I may ſecurely call him S. euen in this life, ſith he hath reuealed vnto me withall, that his ſoule is canonized in heauen.

Of the ready obedience of Br. Ruffinus.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

THis good Religious B. Ruffinus, was as it were insensible of exteriour things, by reason of his continuall exercise of prayer, he had as an other Moyles an vnseemly grace of speech, so that his wordes seemed to be forcibly drawne out of his mouth, and therefore he spake little. Yet though in that respect he were very vnfit to preach, S. Francis neuertheles commanded him one day to goe to Alsifium to preach what the holie Ghost should inspire him: wherein he excusing himselfe, the S. to chastice his disobedience, caused him to goe thither without his capuce, which he ioyful executed & preached to the people. But S. Frâcis, to chastice himselfe for so strange a commandement, followed him also without capuce (or as some affirme naked.) And in that manner did end the sermon which Br. Ruffinus had begun, with such cōpunction & effusion of teares of the people, as if it had bin good friday: as hath bin more amply discoursed in the 30. chapter of the first booke and first volume of this first part; the great obedience of Br. Ruffinus requiring so admirable an effect, to the spirituall profit of the people.

How the deuils feared and shunned Br. Ruffinus.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

*The deuil
left one
that was
possessed
att the
only sight
of Br.
Ruffinus.*

THis Religious S. was for his great humility and purity so feared of the deuils, that they could not endure his presence, as in diuers accidents hath bin experienced, and one time particulerlie when he went a begging in the Cittie of Alsifium, meeting many men that led one possessed very strongly bound and tyed towards S. Francis to be dispossessed, he seeing Br. Ruffinus cryed out very loud and gaue such a straine, that breaking the cordes wherwith he was bound, he escaped and ran from the men that held him, who getting hold of him againe, and much admiring such an vnwounded act, asked him the cause therof, & he answered, I did it, because that same Br. Ruffinus which asked almoste hath by his vertues and prayers so burned me, that I cannot remaine in this body: which spoken he presently fled and left the poore man deliuered.

The holy Father S. Francis being one time in prayer on the mount Aluerne in a sequestred cell, the deuilles laboured to disquiett him, casting stones very furiously and making such a noyse, that the mountaine seemed

seemed ready to be ouerthrowne; it chaunced that in the meane time Br. *And lest*
 Ruffin. passed that way, who coming to aske S. F. his benediction, called *to trouble*
 to him a farre, saying: *God be prayesd*, and incontinently the deuils making *S. Francis*
 an extreme noyle fled away. S. Francis that had heard the voice of Br.
 Ruffinus, & had also heard the flight of the deuils, sodenly going out of
 his cell, cryed vnto the: Yee Proud creatures, stay the coming of B. Ruf-
 finus, that he may chastice you, for he knoweth you very well.

It happened an other time that ten possessed personnes which were *Ten pos-*
 abroad in the fieldes, mett there Br. Ruffinus, whome hauing seene they *seduced per-*
 presently fled, and being demaunded of some that passed by why they *sons fled*
 hastened away, they answered: by reason of that Br. Ruffinus, by whome *frō him.*
 weare pressed as grapes in the wine presse.

The thirteenth chapter which should follow here, is inserted before, to better pur-
pose, touching a greatt temptation of Br. Ruffin. and how he surmounted
the deuils by vertue of the prayer of S. Francis.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

THis chapter is not conuenient to be placed here, as well becau-
 se the lubiect therof happened to him before he attayned to
 such perfection, and therefore this can be no proper place for it,
 as also because it is amply discoursed in the 45. chapter of the first booke,
 and first volume of this first part.

Of the death of the glorious Br. Ruffinus, and of the apparition he had
a little before his death.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

Brother Ruffinus and Br. Leo were both sick att one same time,
 as we haue formerly said in the last chapter of the life of Br. Ber-
 nard. Now as vpon this admirable vision they discoursed with
 themselues, of the soule of the said Brother Bernard, and that they ca-
 me for an other soule. Brother Leo thincking it to be himselfe that
 should dye, because he felt himselfe very sicke, he arose out of his
 bedde as well as he could, and went very ioyfully to the bed of
 Brother Ruffinus, to whome he said: Brother rest in peace for it is
 the will of God that I now dye to goe to his glory. Brother Ruf-
 finus answered him: Brother you are deceaued, for the vision which
 you haue had, and the wordes which haue bin spoaken to you, are to be
 vnderstood of me, & not of you, for our holy Father S. Francis, glorious

as he is, came lately thither, accompanied with a great number of Religious, who told me I was to passe from this miserable life to the most blessed, in very short time: for earnest pledge whereof, he gaue me a sweet and gracious kisse, through which my mouth and lippes continue full of miraculous sweetnes. And that you may belieue me, come neere & you shall know it. Brother Leo comming neere vnto him, felt such a sweetnesse of that precious odour, that he was fully assured of what Brother Ruffinus had sayd: so the time of his departure drawing on, he called all the Religious of the Couent before him, whome he animated to the obseruance of their profession and to fraternall charity by most pious and excellent discourses, in the midst of which his soule departed to eternall peace, with that glorious company which expected him in heauen: and his body was buryed in the Couent of saint Francis, where were already entered some other of his disciples and deere companions.

The life of brother Leo.

How Brother Leo was familiar companion, Confessour, and Secretary to saint Francis.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Brother Leo was Confessour and Secretary to saint Francis, in which function after he had much profited in the active life, by all kinde of vertues and perfections, he was by the diuine grace brought to the delicious garden of the contemplation and holy conuersation of saint Francis, and in regard that he was singularly adorned and endued with the vertue of simplicity, the Saint particularly affected him, and reioyced much in his familiarity. Sometimes he would call him Brother beast, and simple sheep of God: and intending to decipher a true Frere Minor, he would say that the Religious who had the simplicity and purity of Brother Leo, was really a Frere Minor. Now as he was almost alwayes companion to saint Francis, so had he the fauour to see him many times in extasie, & his body lifted vp in the ayre aboue the trees, and then himselfe would fall on the ground in the very place whence the Saint was eleuated into the aire, and demand of God mercy in fauour of his Saint. It was he alone that merited to be companion of the Saint that Lent, which he kept of saint Michael Th'archangell, when he receaued the sacred stigmates on the Mount Aluerne: where he was participant of all the merueilous apparitions & reuelations that did precede the seraphichal apparition of

IE-

IESVS CHRIST. And he was the first to whome the holy Father shewed his sacred stigmates, as to his most deere and cordiall freind, and to the Father of his soule that did daily dresse them, as in many places of his life hath bin very amply discoursed.

Part of the 16. chapter, which followeth in the Spanish text, is placed in the midst of the 11. chapter of the second booke and first volume of this part: because thy are certaine reuelations of saint Francis which saint Leo had, the rest is that which followeth.

*How it was reuealed to brother Leo, that vlesse we be asisted of God,
we can doe nothing of our selues.*

Brother Leo one time in prayer, had a cogitation of presumption, trusting on himselfe and his vertues: And being in this cogitation, there appeared vnto him a hand, and he heard a voice from aboue that said vnto him: Brother Leo, know that without this hand thou canst performe no good thinge. Which Brother Leo hauing heard, entirely enflamed in diuine loue, he arose on his feet, and beholding heauen, he diuers times thus spake with a loud voice: It is true my God, that if thy puissant hand doe not helpe and alsist our infirmity, we can doe nothing of our selues: much lesse shall we resist our ennemies, and obtaine the meritt of perseuerance in thy loue and seruice.

The 17. chapter is put after the last of the second looke and first volume of this first part, where is related a vision which Brother Leo had, of the vniuersall Iudgement, as being a matter appertaining to the holy Father saint Francis.

How Brother Leo burned the box which Brother Helias General of the Order had sett at the Church dore, to gather almose for the fabrique, against the purity of the rule.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

Brother Helias, who after the death of saint Francis for many yeares gouerned the Religion as General, was he that very sumptuously builded the Couent of S. Francis att Alsium, where Pope Gregory the ninth layd the first stone: the almose of the people of

Bbbb 3

Alsi-

Alsifium not sufficing for so great an edifice, Brother Helias seeking all meanes possible to find money for the work, sett a box att the Church dore with this inscription: *The almose for the sabrique*, which many good Religious hauing seene, and especially Brother Leo, in regard that it was a thing directly against the obseruance of the purity of their rule, being zealous of the Euangelicall Pouertie, they repaired to the venerable Brother Giles to consult with him, and to aduise together by what meanes they might preuent this inconuenience: who answered that he dwelt att our Lady of Angels, and therefore though one built a Couent as great as the Citty of Alsifium, he would notwithstanding be content to remaine wher he was, and that was all his care. But Brother Leo not satisfied with this answere, they added: we haue a purpose to burne that box: what think you of it? Brother Giles then with teares of his eyes replied: If Brother Helias be dead, you may doe so; but if he liue, lett him proceed, for you will hardly endure his persecution. But Brother Leo and his companions leauing Brother Giles, tooke the box and burned it, which Brother Helias vnderstanding, and being extremely vexed therewith, he very cruelly disciplined them all: and hauing detaineyd the some time in prison, he banished them from Alsifium: for which and other like matters, the Pope put Brother Helias from his Prelature: as we haue formerly related in the life of S. Antony of Padua.

Of certaine miracles, and of the death of the glorious Brother Leo.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

WHiles Brother Leo resided att our Lady of Angels, it happened that a poore woman of Alsifium dyed in trauaile of child, whose mother was also a very poore old widow, who being much afflicted att the death of her daughter, and not knowing how to bring vp the litle infant that was left vnto her, she went to brother Leo for his counsaile, to whome with teares discouering her greife, she moued him to haue compassion of her misery, so that he went and with seruour offered his prayers, demanding of Gods assistance for that so desolate poore old woman. His prayer ended, he sayd vnto her: Goe good woman, and putt the child to thy breast, and hope that almighty God will giue thee the milke that he would haue giuen the mother of the child. Though this old woman was much amazed att this speech, yet the infant being present, she obeyed: for she offered her breastes vnto it, which were found very full of milke to releiue the child. And the same continued as long as there was vie for it, and the child attayning to competent age beame a man of the church.

He

*Br. Leo
obtained
milke for
an old
woman
to nurse
a child.*

He often recounted that he had bin miraculously nursed by the merittes of Brother Leo.

This seruant of God meeting a yong man in the way, and beholding his countenance, sayd vnto him: thou shalt be one of our Religious: which wordes had such efficacie in his hart, that he could neuer apply himselfe to any thing. till he became a Frere Minor

A woman of Codale, in the vally of Spoletum, hauing an apostume in her brest, which ordinarily yelded forth corruption, and being void of all helpe that might any way releiue her, she repaired to Brother Leo, with great deuotion praying him to make the signe of the crosse one the place greiued: which being done, the apostume vanished, so that no apparance remayned therof.

A yong man being exceedingly afflicted with the falling sicknes and a continuall feauer, did secretly cutt of a peece of the habitt of Brother Leo, out of the great deuotion he carryed towards him, which hauing layd on his neck, he was presently cured: but hauing lost it, the said infirmity retourned, yet hauing gotten an other peece, he was perfectly cured againe.

A man of Treuy, being by commandement of the gouernour of Spoletum imprisoned and enchained, he recommended himselfe to the prayers of Brother Leo who was att our Lady of Angels, who appeared vnto him about the time of noone, and in presence of all that were there, vnchayned him, then drew him out of prison, and commanded him to goe as a Pilgrime to our Lady of Angels; which hauing performed, he there found Brother Leo, att whose feet prostrating himselfe, he thancked him for the great & singuler fauour receaued of him. But he answered him, that he should only thancke the Virgin Mary, whose feast of her holy purification was celebrated that day. Our lord wrought many other miracles by the merittes of his seruant Brother Leo, to manifest his sanctity to the world, which would be too tedious to be inserted. That holy Father Brother Ruffinus and Brother Angelus by commandement of their generall composed the legend of saint Francis, which was afterward called the legend of three companions, wherof the most worthy and remarckable hauing bin extracted and put in other histories of saint Francis, the same was afterward lost. Brother Leo att length hauing in vertue and sanctity accomplished his dayes, he left the desert of the world, and retired to his celestiall contry, He was entered att Alsium, in the Church of S. Francis.

THE CHRONICLES

The life of Brother Siluester.

Of the conuersation, merites and death of Br. Syluester.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

THe good Father Br. Siluester, was the first preist that entred into the Religion of S. Francis. In the first booke and first volume of this first part we haue sett downe his conuersion, and how he became a Frere Minor. This was his eleuenth disciple, who so encreased and profited in the vertue of sanctity, that he discoursed and conuerſed with God, as ordinarily one freind doth with an other: which S. Francis often experienced, and diuers times gaue testimony therof, as when he reuealed vnto him that the will of God was they should apply themſelues to preaching: And also when S. Francis commanded him to chase the deuils out of the city of Arezzo, which is amply discoursed in the fift and sixt chapters of the first booke of this first part. Now this holy ſeruant of God, after he had perfectly ſerued his maiesty many yeares, reposed in peace, and was buried att Alsifium in the Church of S. Francis, with his other companions.

The life of Brother Macie.

Of the holy conuerſation and obedience of Br. Macie.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

BRother Macie of Marignan, was very prudent, and well borne, God gaue him the talent of commendable ſpeech, eſpecially whe he diſcourſed of ſpiritual things, and therfore S. Francis often had him in company, that they who came to ſee and viſitt him, might be ſo well entertayned by the delightfullneſſe of his diſcourſe, that they ſhould not trouble him in his prayer. Now the holy Father S. Francis, as a diſcreet paſtour that continually watcheth ouer his flock, conſidering that Br. Macie dayly encreaſed in vertue, to the end that no vanity ſhould cauſe him to fall from the hight of his prudence, he ſought to ground him well on the firme and ſecure foundation of humilitie; wherefore he one day in preſence of the other Religious ſaid vnto him: Brother, theſe your companions here, haue obtayned of God the grace of prayer and contemplation, and you haue receaued the grace of diſcourſe: and therfore you are moſt fitt to entertaine thoſe without the gate that
come

come to visit vs. Therefore I am resoluēd that your Brethren here shall all apply themselves to contemplation, and that you shall haue care of the gate, of the kitchen, and of begging: so that no other Religious shall be troubled with any temporall care. When the Brethren shall eat in the refectory, you shall be without the dore, that strangers may be entertained by your good speeches, before they ring, so that it may be no trouble to them to expect: all this shall you performe by the merittes of holy obedience. Br. Macie very ioyfully accepted all, and for a time exercised it, till the other Religious hauing knowne the vertue he had in prayer, and the other partes of his perfection, they obtayned of S. Francis, who also knewe him right well, that all the offices which he had might be equally diuided among them.

The 22. chapter, is placed after the 100. of the first booke of this present part, becaule it is a matter particulierlie appertayning to Sainct Francis: it is an exercise of mortification performed by Brother Macie.

How Br. Macie obtained of God the vertue of humilitie.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

Brother Leo entring one day into spirituall discourses with Br. Macie, and some other Religious, among other thinges he said: I know a worthy seruant of God (meaning S. Francis) that hath obtayned many graces of his diuine maiesty, as well in the actiue as contemplatiue life, and with his graces, he hath so profound a humility, that he thincketh there is not in the world so great a sinner as himselfe. This humility maketh him merueilously to encrease in sanctity, and so confirmeth him in the grace of God, that whiles he shall haue the same for his roote, which he hath already engrafted in God, it is impossible for him to fall. As Brother Leo thus discoursed of humilitie, Brother Macie that gaue attentiuē care vnto him, became so affected to this vertue so gratefull to God, that he went to his prayer and hauing lifted his eyes towards heauen, he vowed to almighty God that he would neuer take ioy of this world, till he knew and felt in his soule, that God had giuen him this vertue of humility: and so by sighes and teares he afflicted himselfe before almighty God, and seeming to himselfe that he iustly deserued hell, if he did not obtaine this grace and vertue, wherby that worthy friend of God which was full of all perfection, reputed himselfe inferiour to all creatures, and persisting continually in this griefe, obseruing the vow which he had made, and perseuering in his petition vnto God, sacrificing him-

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Afsifium not fufficing for fo great an edifice, Brother Helias seeking all meanes poffible to find mony for the work, fett a box att the Church dore with this infcription: *The almoſe for the fabrique*, which many good Religious hauing ſeene, and eſpecially Brother Leo, in regard that it was a thing directly againſt the obſeruatione of the purity of their rule, being zealous of the Euangelicall Pouertie, they repaired to the venerable Brother Giles to conſult with him, and to aduiſe together by what meanes they might preuent this inconuenience: who anſweared that he dwelt att our Lady of Angels, and therfore though one built a Couent as great as the Citty of Afsifium, he would notwithstanding be content to remaine wher he was, and that was all his care. But Brother Leo not ſatiſfied with this anſweare, they added: we haue a purpoſe to burne that box: what thinke you of it? Brother Giles then with teares of his eyes replied: If Brother Helias be dead, you may doe ſo; but if he liue, lett him proceed, for you will hardly endure his perfect ution. But Brother Leo and his companions leauing Brother Giles, tooke the box and burned it, which Brother Helias vnderſtanding, and being extremely vexed therewith, he very cruelly diſciplined them all: and hauing detayned the ſome time in priſon, he baniſhed them from Afsifium: for which and other like matters, the Pope put Brother Helias from his Prelature: as we haue formerly related in the life of S. Antony of Padua.

Of certaine miracles, and of the death of the glorious Brother Leo.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

WHiles Brother Leo reſided att our Lady of Angels, it happened that a poore woman of Afsifium dyed in trauaile of child, whoſe mother was alſo a very poore old widow, who being much afflicted att the death of her daughter, and not knowing how to bring vp the little infant that was left vnto her, ſhe went to brother Leo for his counſaile, to whome with teares diſcouering her greife, ſhe moued him to haue compaſſion of her miſery, ſo that he went and with feruour offered his prayers, demanding of God aſſiſtance for that ſo deſolate poore old womā. His prayer ended, he ſayd vnto her: Goe good woman, and putt the child to thy breſt, and hope that almighty God will giue thee the milke that he would haue giuen the mother of the child. Though this old woman was much amazed att this ſpeech, yet the infant being preſent, ſhe obeyed: for ſhe offered her breaſtes vnto it, which were found very full of milke to releiue the child. And the ſame continued as long as there was vſe for it, and the child attayning to competent age beame a man of the church.

He

*Br. Leo
obtained
milke for
an old
woman
to nurse
a child.*

He often recounted that he had bin miraculously nursed by the merittes of Brother Leo.

This seruant of God meeting a yong man in the way, and beholding *He fore-* his countenance, sayd vnto him: thou shalt be one of our Religious: *told a* which wordes had such efficacie in his hart, that he could neuer apply *yong man* himselfe to any thing. till he became a Frere Minor *that he*

A woman of Codale, in the vally of Spoletum, hauing an apostu- *should* me in her brest, which ordinarily yelded forth corruption, and being *be a Fre-* void of all helpe that might any way releiue her, she repaired to Brother *re Minor.* Leo, with great deuotion praying him to make the signe of the crosse *With the* one the place greiued: which being done, the apostume vanished, so *signe of* that no apparance remayned therof. *the crosse*

A yong man being exceedingly afflicted with the falling sicknes *he cured* and a continuall seauer, did secretly cutt of a peece of the habitt of Bro- *an apo-* ther Leo, out of the great deuotion he carryed towards him, which *stume.* hauing layd on his neck, he was presently cured: but hauing lost it, *A peece* the said infirmity retourned, yet hauing gotten an other peece, he was *of his ha-* perfectly cured againe. *bit cured*

A man of Treuy, being by commandement of the gouernour of *the fal-* Spoletum imprisoned and enchained, he recommended himselfe to the *ling sick-* prayers of Brother Leo who was att our Lady of Angels, who appea- *nesse.* red vnto him about the time of noone, and in prelence of all that *He mira-* were there, vnchayned him, then drew him out of prison, and com- *culously* manded him to goe as a Pilgrime to our Lady of Angels; which ha- *deline-* uing performed, he there found Brother Leo, att whose feet prostra- *red a pri-* ting himselfe, he thancked him for the great & singuler fauour receaued *soner.* of him. But he answered him, that he should only thancke the Virgin Mary, whose feast of her holy purification was celebrated that day. Our lord wrought many other miracles by the merittes of his seru-
uant Brother Leo, to manifest his sanctity to the world, which would be too tedious to be inserted. That holy Father Brother Ruffinus and Brother Angelus by commandement of their generall composed the legend of saint Francis, which was afterward called the legend of three companions, wherof the most worthy and remarckable hauing bin extracted and put in other histories of saint Francis, the same was afterwardly lost. Brother Leo att length hauing in vertue and sanctity accomplished his dayes, he left the desert of the world, and retired to his celestiaall contry, He was entered att Alsifium, in the Church of S. Francis.

THE CHRONICLES

The life of Brother Siluester.

Of the conuersation, merities and death of Br. Syluester.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

THe good Father Br. Siluester, was the first preist that entred into the Religion of S. Francis. In the first booke and first volume of this first part we haue sett downe his conuersion, and how he became a Frere Minor. This was his eleuenth discipule, who so encreased and profited in the vertue of sanctity, that he discoursed and conuersed with God, as ordinarily one freind doth with an other: which S. Francis often experienced, and diuers times gaue testimony therof, as when he reuealed vnto him that the will of God was they should apply themselves to preaching: And also when S. Francis commanded him to chase the deuils out of the citty of Arezzo, which is amply discoursed in the fift and sixt chapters of the first booke of this first part. Now this holy seruant of God, after he had perfectly serued his maiesty many yeares, reposed in peace, and was buried att Alsifium in the Church of S. Francis, with his other companions.

The life of Brother Macie.

Of the holy conuersation and obedience of Br. Macie.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

BRother Macie of Marignan, was very prudent, and well borne, God gaue him the talent of commendable speech, especially whē he discoursed of spirituall thinges, and therefore S. Francis often had him in company, that they who came to see and visitt him, might be so well entertayned by the delightfulnesse of his discourse, that they should not trouble him in his prayer. Now the holy Father S. Francis, as a discreet pastour that continually watcheth ouer his flock, considering that Br. Macie dayly encreased in vertue, to the end that no vanity should cause him to fall from the hight of his prudence, he sought to ground him well on the firme and secure foundation of humilitie; wherefore he one day in presence of the other Religious said vnto him: Brother, these your companions here, haue obtayned of God the grace of prayer and contemplation, and you haue receaued the grace of discourse: and therefore you are most fitt to entertaine those without the gate that come

come to visit vs. Therefore I am resoluēd that your Brethren here shall all apply themselues to contemplation, and that you shall haue care of the gate, of the kitchen, and of begging: so that no other Religious shall be troubled with any temporall care. When the Brethren shall eat in the refectory, you shalbe without the dore, that strangers may be entertained by your good speeches, before they ring, so that it may be no trouble to them to expect: all this shall you performe by the merittes of holy obedience. Br. Macie very ioyfully accepted all, and for a time exercised it, till the other Religious hauing knowne the vertue he had in prayer, and the other partes of his perfection, they obtayned of S. Francis, who also knewe him right well, that all the offices which he had might be equally diuided among them.

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him-

THE CHRONICLES

himselfe by abstinences, disciplines and teares, he deserved att length as he went one day alone to pray on the mountaine, to heare a voice from heauen that twice called him by his name. Wherefore he knowing the voice of God, presently answered: Lord here I am: and then God said vnto him: What wilt thou giue me, if I giue thee the vertue of humility, which with so great instance thou hast demaunded of me? Br. Macie then answered: My God I will giue thee all that I haue to my very eyes: But God answered: keep thy eyes: I will giue thee gratis a gift of what thou hast demaunded. And from that heuer Br. Macie had entier possession of the humility which he had so much desired, together with such a diuine light, that he liued almost alwayes in a continuall spirituall ioy, as if himselfe had no longer liued, but IESVS CHRIST only in him.

How Br. Macie desired to obtaine of God, to loue his enemies as his dearest friendes.

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

BVt this ioy continued not long, as it happeneth of the waters of God, the thirst wherof augmenth the more by drincking therof: for after he had receaued this grace he became more sorrowfull then before, by reason of the vehement desire he had to obtayne a greater: which the other Religious perceaing, they one day called him and sayd: Tell vs Br. Macie, are we cause of thy sorrow? or what straunge thing is happened? we were wont to see thee exceeding ioyfull, and with a gracious and smiling contenance, but now we see thee very melancholy and much troubled. Br. Macie answered them: My deere brethren you doe not cause or procure me any heauinesse; but I will tell you whence it proceedeth. You must know, that some dayes past I haue laboured to obtaine of almighty God the precious vertue of holy humility, by meane wherof I thinck to acknowledge my selfe the most vile and greatest sinner in the world, as in deed I am. And because my humane reason (in respect of its pride) could not conceaue that the man which is day and night exercised in wachinges, abstinēces, prayers, and other practises of vertue, doth not esteeme himselfe much better then him who is daily employed in speaking ill, or liuing idly, or brutishly, without obseruing his promised vowes: att length God, of his mercy hath graunted me this humility, which by any spirituall exercise, by prayer, or whatsoeuer other meritt can neuer be obtaigned. Know yee then, that the cause of my sorrow is, that I cannot attine to this degree: if any one should cutt off my handes and feet,

feet, and crush out my eyes, though I should pardon him and doe him all the seruices I could deuise: I should not yet with so good a will loue him as before. This is that which I demaund of my God, for the height and perfection of the grace which he hath graunted me: and then shall my soule be entierly ioyfull and content, as I hope, being conformable vnto his will, he will afford me the same.

All this is spoaken to lett you vnderstand, what were the cogitaciōs, and what the desires of the first Fathers of the Order of S. Francis, what were their gold, their siluer, their riches, and their treasures, such were their practises and negotiations, to witt, to learne only the meane to obtaine the perfection of vertues, which are the merchandise wherewith is purchased the kingdome of heauen, and are the precious stones which the wise and spirituall merchant should seeke: and the treasure for purchase wherof he should not only sell all he hath in the world, but euen the desires of what soeuer he may haue: as also all temporall tast and selfe will, eating, drincking, and sleeping; and by meane of very strict abstinence, of mortifications, watchinges, teares, and prayers they obtayned of God the vertues which they demaunded: and hauing obtayned them, doe possesse and conserue them to the great glory of God, to the profit of their soules, and to the exceeding edification of their neighbour.

Of the counsaile which Br. Macie gaue to a murmurer, to correct his fault.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

THere was a very deuout man that ordinarily frequented the Couent of the Frere Minors of Cybotoly neere Perusia, and discoursing with the Religious, he alwayes murmured at the sinnes of his neighbours, committed in his Citty. Br. Macie hauing often times heard him, could no longer endure him: for hauing formerly forborne him in respect of the presence of the Guardian, at length he drew him a part and sayd. My sonne I beseech you take the counsaile that I giue you, as from one of yeares. Haue alwayes before your eyes and in your mouth the life of the holy and vertuous, and alwayes speake of their good conditions: for, doeing so, if thou bee euill, thou wilt become good: and if thou be good, thou wilt therby become better. But be not delighted, yea shunne with all possible care, to speake or heare spoaken of the sinnes and defectes of your neighbour: for at length, of good you will become euill, and of bad farre worse, and will doe the same you heard spoaken of them. These pious wordes did not a litle profit this miserable man, in regard that Brother Macie had such

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a grace

a grace of deliuey, that whatsoeuer he spake was to each one gratefully accepted, and imprinted in the hearer. Wherefore S. Francis describing a perfect Frere Minor, among other conditions, he must haue, (would he say) the religious and good conceite, the naturall science, and spirituall eloquence of Brother Macie.

Of the prayer of Brother Macie, and of his holy death.

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

Brother Macie was a Religious exceedingly addicted to prayer, yea more then any other, shedding therein day and night abundance of teares, as to all his Brethré was most manifest. He did eat only once a day, which was towards the euening, the night being come he tooke his rest, about midnigh he arose, and continued in prayer till day, in which the other Religious heard him often to repeat these wordes: My Lord IESVS CHRIST giue me if thou please, true contrition of my sinnes, and giue me grace to amende, and to satisfie thee according to thy holy will: which wordes he neuer ceased to repeat, till he bathed and dissolued in teares: in the morning hauing heard masse, he retired into his cell, and singing with a very deuout tune, would say: My Lord IESVS CHRIST, permitt me I beseech thee, to feare thee, and to loue thee with all my hart: then falling to prayer he was heard often to repeat, *vh, vh, vh* with a contented, ioyfull, and feruent voice. In his contemplation, his countenance was alwayes very pleasing and ioyfull. Brother Iames of Falerone, a Religious of exceeding piety, demaunding of him one day, because he had often seene and heard him in this spirituall ioy to vtter those wordes without chaunge, why he did not varie his tune; he redily answered: because finding all good and contentment in one thing, it is not needfull to change the tune. Thus this holy Father, replenished with many graces and merittes, passed from this temporall life to the celestiaall and eternall, and was buried in the Church of sainct Francis att Alsifium, where were his other companions: some are of opinion that his body lyeth att Mur in the Marquisat of Ancona.

The liues of the holy Brethren, Brother Zacharie, and Brother Walter.

How Brother Zacharie and Brother Walter, were by commandement of the holy Father saint Francis sent into Portugall, and of the first Monastery they founded there.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

Brother Zacharie and Brother Walter were sent by the holy F. S. Francis with some other Religious, into Portugall, there, by their preachings and good examples to conuert sinners to penance, where being arriued, they were ill treated and entertained, as well because they were strangers, as for the nouelty of their habitt: theire defect of the Spanish tongue, was cause that they were not gratefully heard, and that they did not willingly discourse, and hauing no letters or patentes of the approbation of their rule and profelsion, they could nowhere be receaued, for the Portugals feared that they might be some heretikes of Italy, where then were many: so that these good Religious were constrained to repaire vnto the queene Vraca, the wife of Alphonfus the second, to whome they recounted their persecution, and prayed her to bestow on them some little church or chappel, where they might securely remaine, and celebrate the diuine seruice. This queene hauing graciously entertayned them, she curiously enformed her selfe of their life, estate, and rule, and the cause of their comming into Portugall, and resting at length sufficiently assured that they were the true seruantes of IESVS CHRIST, and professours of the obseruation of the Euangelicall life, she procured for them of the king a little place nere vnto the Citty of Conimbria, among the hermitages there, and also permission to goe to Lisbone and to the citty of Guimaranes, where the reputation of their sanctity being spread, came euen to the Princes Saucia, sister to the said king Alphonfus, a very deuoute lady, and enclined to all *The Freres* vertues, who had colecrated her virginity to IESVS CHRIST, & dwelt *Minors* in the Citty of Alenquer. She exceedingly desiring to see and know these *Frere Minors*, which were so much spoken of sent for the, and hauing *established* heard the discourse of God, and obserued & remarked their spirit & ver- *in Por-* tue, would not permitt them to depart from her, but lodged them in her *ragall* by owne pallace, and assigned them a Church neere to the water where *two Prin-* there were many poore celles, such as they required: and there did they *esse*, remayne with out desire of any other, or consent to haue them bettered they being proper to the true life of these perfect poore of our Lord, the first founder of the sacred Religion of S. Francis. The place which these first Religious possessed, is now the Church of sainte Catherine, at the foot of the Citty of Alenquer, as is found recorded.

Of the sanctity and miracles of Brother Zachary, who was the first Guardian of the Couent of Alenquer, and of his death.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

God miraculouſly provided for the Frere Minors of Alenquer.

Notable miracle of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

THe said Monastery being thus founded with exceeding poverty and sanctity, by the vertue and exemplar life of the sayd disciples of the glorious Father saint Francis, and namely of Brother Zachary, as being the most notable in all vertues. This holy Father zealous towards God in worckes of charity, in watchinges and prayers, did often offer his prayers before a Crucifix, which was after in the Chapter of the said Couent of Alenquer till the year 1414. by which our Lord aduertised him of many thinges, as well concerning his owne as his neighbours welfare. The consolation and spirituall ioy which he receaued of this image was such, as he could not leaue it but with great greife. Brother Zacharie being Guardian, it one day happened that there were but two loaves of bread in al the Couent; the hower of refection being come, he enioyned all the brethren to prayer, then commanded them to sitt downe att table, and the sayd loaves to be portioned among all the Religious, and att the same instant there appeared an Angell att their gate, in forme of a beautilfull yong man, who brought them as many loaves as there were persons in the Monastery, his grace and beauty was such as could be imagined. He calling for the Guardian gaue it vnto him, who with the other Religious knowing this present to come to them from the hand of God, who hauing care of all his creatures, neuer forgetteth his true poore, they gaue him thanckes for it: Many kept of this bread as a holy relique: but namely the Princeſſe Saucia who would haue her part therof. Preaching on a time with great zeale of the faith of IESVS CHRIST and of the saluation of soules, one that was incredulous being partly contrite and conuerted by his sermon, would afterwardeſ confesse vnto him, but by all the industry the good Father could deuise, he could not rid him of his doubtſ touching the Blessed sacrament of the Eucharist. Att length hauing an exceeding desire to saue his soule, he sayd vnto him: Sith thou canst not be cured by the wordes of God, come againe to morrow in the morning, with the greatest deuotion thou canst, and perhappes it will please our Lord IESVS CHRIST, to illuminate and confirme thee by his diuine preſence: and so dismissing him, and that day ended, the Saint spent all that night in deuotion, praying God to voutſaſe to illuminate and confirme this poore

reman in the holy faith. The next morning, he celebrated masse, this man being present with great deuotion, but the wordes of consecration being vttered, he saw the sacred host conuerted into flesh, and so continuynge till the Priest was ready to communicate: and then he saw it retourne to the forme of an host as before the consecration. This admirable vision entierly cleered his soule of all doubtles he had, and fully confirmed him in the Catholike faith. This glorious Father att length yelding vp his soule, it ascended to heauen, and his body was buryed on the right side of the crosse of the Church of the said Couent in Alenquer, with his other companions and the holy disciples of the glorious Father saint Francis. The inhabitants of Alenquer att this present take the earth of that sepulcher, and with great reuerence apply it to the sicke, who thereby recouer their health.

The
earth of
the robe
of Br.
Zachary
worketh
miracles.

Of a Religious that was disciple to saint Francis, in the Couent of Alenquer.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

AMong all the Religious that were sent by the holy Father saint Francis to the said Couent of Alenquer, there was one very deuout and solitary, that, flying especially all conuersation and discourses with women, spent almost all his time in prayer. Now it happened that one of the ladyes of the Princes Saucia, called Mary Gracia, noting this Religious to be so spirituall, began to haue perticuler deuotion vnto him; and therefore she desired to haue some conference with him. But this holy Religious refusig all acquaintance and speech with any women, shunned her with all endeaour. Neuertheles it once happened that the Lady and the Religious in such sort met each with other, that the Religious could not without discurtisie auoyd to speake vnto her: for she much vrged him therto: but he sayd vnro her: Madame, I beseech you before I spake vnto you, cause to be brought hither some straw with fier, which hauing don, he willed her to putt the straw & the fier together, the lady hauing so dō the straw presētly burned, the Religious then sayd vnto her: Madame, what issue you haue seene the straw to haue with the fier, the like, belieue me hath the seruant of God with a woman speaking with her without necessity. Whereat this lady was so shamefully amazed, that leauing this good Religious, she neuer more insinuated herselfe by her curious deuotion to trouble him. Wherefore as this holy Religious perseuered in vertues, so att the end of his life, his dead body

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body was endowed with such a beauty and splendour, that all the Religious both admired and reioyced exceedingly, thereby having more perfect assurance of his sanctity. Att the instant of his death, S. Antony of Padua, who then was Canon Regular in the monastery of S. Crotle in Conimbria, celebrating the masse, saw in spirit the soule of this Religious mount into the aire, and gloriously to ascend into Paradise; hauing first passed Purgatory, as a bird that flyeth swiftly.

Of the life, sanctity, death and miracles of Br. Walter, and of the ancient custome of Portugall, to record matters that happened, by the yeares of Augustus Caesar.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

THe vertue and sanctity of Br. Walter, disciple of S. Francis are yet of great fame, he hauing so piously and exemplarily liued, that in a short time he drew all the neighbour contrye to be friends to his Order; he also conuerted them from many vices and sinnes wherto the inhabitantes therof were much enclined and addicted, and exercised them in vertues. It is sayd that this holy Father being dead and enterred, there issued out of his tombe an oyle of such vertue as it cured many diseases, and perseuered till his body was transported to the great Couent neere to the said city. The day of his death, which was the second of August, was a long time festiually solemnised; and in regard of the great concourse of people that from euery where repayed thither, to honour and reuerence the holy reliques, there was kept a generall faire. A long time after, the Frere Minors hauing built their Couent very neere the city, the Canons resolved to steale from them this holy body: but though to this purpose they came thither with a great number of men, and afterwardes with strength of oxen to draw away the tombe of the sayd S. entier: neuertheles they could not so much as lift vp the reliques alone out of the tombe, by what soeuer forcible endeavour, nor much lesse remoue the tombe from his place, notwithstanding the force of the oxen: so that att length perceauing the miracle, and that neither the will of God, nor of the S. was, that they should committ this theft, they full of shame and confusion departed, yet for this respect they had the S. in greater reuerence, though they went away much discontented. The Religious hauing the next morning vnderstood all the matter, they went to the tombe, whence, without any impediment they tooke the sacred reliques, and carryed them to their new Couent: and they that did accompany them did exceedingly admire to see, that alioone as they put their hādes into the tombe to seeke for the reliques, they

*The body
of Br.
Walter
could not
be lifted.*

they tooke them out without any difficulty, which so many men and oxen together could not doe before. Thus was this holy body placed in the Church of S. Frâcis att Guimarames, where it is exceedingly reuerenced of the inhabitantes, who in their sicknesse and necessities accustometh to recommend themselues vnto him; and of deuotion to take of the earth of his sepulcher: they haue also great experience of his merittes with God, by the fauours and graces which they daily by his intercessiō receaue of his diuine maiesty. The three first monasteries of the Frere Minors in the kingdome of Portugall, were those of Lisbonne, of Guimarames, and of Alenquer, two of the which were transported to the city of Guimarames, as hath bin sayd, and euen the Oratory of Alenquer, as well in regard itt stood in an euill ayre, as for the deuotion of the Princesse Saucia, was also chaunged and accommodated in the Pallace where her selfe dwelt, vpon the Mount nere vnto the City, and the third which is att Lisbonne, is not so neere the City as the others. There is nothing found in the ancient Chronicles, touching the first Religious of this monastery, but there is an epitaph in the first cloyster of the sayd Couent of S. Francis att Lisbonne, wherby appeareth when this monastery, of litle and humble as it was in the beginning, was made so sumptuous as it is: for the writing and inscription of the epitaph is such: In the honour of the foueraigne Monarch, of the glorions Virgin Mary, and of the glorious paranymp Gabriel tharchangel: Iohn Moguephi, Secretary & tresuror of the noble kinge of Portugall, hath erected this Cloister, this church, and this Chapter; his soule rest in peace. This epitaph was written the yeare 1310. out of which number taking thirthy eight yeares, which the Emperour Augustus regned then from the incarnatiō of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, (for the Portugals then counted, as a long time after by the yeares of Augustus) would remayne 1272. from the Natiuity of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST. He that will read this epitaph shal finde it at the discent of the staires that goe frō the gate of the Couent to the Cloister on the left hād. It is sayd that the Church was built by the people of Lisbonne, in which time was also one of the first monasteries of the Frere Minors in Portugall, called S. Antony neere vnto the City of Conimbria, wherin the glorious S. Antony of Lisbonne denominated of Padua, tooke the habitt and there resided some time, till he departed with intention to gett martyrdome. But it is not iustified wherfore the Religious approached so neere to the City, where to this presēt they haue a great Couēt; but it is the foundation of a chappell called S. Antony, which the City in honour of him erected. Neere vnto it there was a very litle cell of earth, whervnto the people had great deuotiō, because it was sayd that S. Antony had formerly dwelt therein, but it was ruinated to build in that place the Monastery of the Frere Minors,

The original of the first monastery of the Frere Minors in Portugall.

In Portugall theyeaes were heretofore counted by the yeare of the Emperour.

of the Prouince of la Pieté in innocation of sainct Antony. This place where the sayd cell was, is yet to this present the Chapter.

The life of Brother Angelus of Pisa, a Religious of Worthy sanctitie.

How Brother Angelus of Pisa, was sent With Brother Albert of Pisa also by the Father S. Francis into England, and of the ill entertainment they received of a Priour of S. Benets Order.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

BRother Angelus of Pisa was a Religious of worthie sanctity, who hauing founded the monastery of Pisa where he was Guardian, and as other affirme, after he had began the Couent at Paris, was by the holy Father sainct Francis in the generall diuision made the yeare 1219. sent into England, and with him went Brother Albert of Pisa, who afterwardes was Generall, and some other Religious giuen him for companions, by their doctrine & good examples to edifie soules in IESVS CHRIST; and also there to found monasteries of Frere Minors. The third of May then these good Religious arriued in Englād, and went to Canterbury, where they were courteously entertayned by the Dominicans who had already a monastery there; thence they went farther to haue speech with the king, who was a very good Catholike, and fauoured all vertuous designs, and therefore they proceeded on towarde Oxford, and in the way they came to a Monastery of Religious of sainct Benedict before Arabud, scituar in the midst of a great mountaine, betweene Oxford and London, the night and abundance of raine preuenting them of trauielling further, and being with all cold, and hauing nothing to eat, they there demaunded of those Religious for the loue of God entertainment for that night, as well in regard of their wearines, as of the raine and cold that hindered their farther trauell. The Porter seeing these men clothed in vnusuall attire and to speake a strange language, presently iudged them to be sycophants and sporting companions to gett their commons, and therefore instantly aduertised the Priour of them; who was discoursing with his Religious, among whome were the Sacristine, the Steward, and a yong Religious. He commanded the Porter to bring them in, with intencion to recreat himselfe in seeing them play some sportes or trickes to content his Religious. The Frere Minors comming before them, were willed to shew some passetime to the company, whereto they very humbly answered

red that they were not Players or sportmakers, but Religious professors of the gospel: The Priour moued with this answere, believing them to be indeed Iesters, commanded them with many mockeries and dirisions to be incontinently and rudely thrust out of the dores. But the yong Religious man perceiving the proud commandement of the Priour, hauing great compassion of those poore barefoot and halfe naked creatures, so entreated the Porter, that he perswaded him for the loue of God to permitt the poore strangers to enter in, when the Priour should be retired, and to lodge them secretly in straw in the stable: which he did, and that Religious carryed them bread and beere: and so recommending himselfe to their prayers, he returned to his cell.

How the said Priour was seuerely punished of God, and also the other two Religious that were with him, for the discourtise vsed towarde his seruantes.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

THe same night the yong Religious that had done that charity to the poore Frere Minors sleeping, saw in a dreame, IESVS CHRIST sitting on a merueillous throne, who calling them all to iudgement, layd with a terrible voice: Bring forth the Priour and the Religious of this place, and they being instantly presented vnto him, there came on the other side a contemptible poore man, cloathed as the Religious that were thrust out of the said Couent, who complainingly with a loud voice and great seruour said to IESVS CHRIST. Most iust iudge, he bloud of the Frere Minors cryeth before thy diuine Maiesty, which this night hath bin shed by these Religious, that would not afford them lodging and refection in such necessitie and extreme perill: these poore Frere Minors hauing left all thy had for thy loue and going into England expresly to procure the saluation of soules redeemed by thy precious bloud, denying them that which they would haue giue them if they had bin parasites and sportmakers. IESVS CHRIST then with a terrible voice layd to the Priour: Of what Order art thou? Of S. Benedict, answered he: IESVS CHRIST turning towards S. Bennett, asked him if it were true, that he was one of his Religious: the Sainct answered: Lord this is a destroyer of my religion, as are also his companions, for my rule commandeth that the Abbots table be common to straungers in necessitie, and these haue alwayes denied thinges necessary to the poore. IESVS CHRIST

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then

then condemned to death the Priour, the Steward, and the Sacristine: and then he tourned to the Religious that had this vision, and had bin benefactour to the Frere Minors, and sayd: And thou, of what Order art thou? he quaking and trembling for feare to heare sentence against himselfe, hauing seene S. Benett aduerse to his Religious, answered: Lord, I am of the Order of this thy poore seruant (meaning S. Francis) of whome I E S V S C H R I S T demaunded if it were true that this Religious was of his Order: he answered that he was, and that he had already admitted him: and then very graciously embraced him, and therewith he awaked vtterly amazed and trembling att this fearfull vision. And arising from his bed, he presently went to the cell of his Priour to relate him all: and entring in, he found him strangled in his bed, hauing so deformed & hideous a face, as procured a horror to the beholders. When att this yong Religious being vtterly terrified cryed out and ran to the celles of the other companions of the Priour, whome he found also strangled with the same fearfull aspect. This made him almost besides himselfe with care to find out the Frere Minors. But the porter had dismissed them for feare of the Priour, so that this yong Religious sought out his Abbot, to whome he recounted this chastisement inflicted by God on his Religious, which was instantly diuulged throughout all that contry, where this yong Religious was the silt that became a Frere Minour: and Br. Angelus and his companions were with great charity receaued by the king of England into the city of Oxford.

How Br. Angelus caused Couents to be builded att Oxford and other where: of his humilitie, and of his death.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

THe king presently appointed them a place neere the walles of the city, and not farre from his pallace, there to build them a Couent, permitting them to breake the said wall for the better commodity of their building: He also permitted them to shutt vp a street that went from the same place to S. Fredesmond, that they might be the more retired, leauing only one gate for the king to enter att his pleasure. Now the fruit that these Religious wrought there, was such, that not only the great and notorious sinners, recalled themselues: but euen many gentlemen were conuerted and left the world, to follow that Apostolique life which those Frere Minors professed, among whome one was Don. Ridolfo a Bishop, who in a vision seeing S. Francis with his companions on the right side of our Lord, soueraigne Iudge, to iudge men, he forsooke his bishoppricke and the world, by permissio
of

of Pope Gregorie the ninth; and became a Frere Minor: as also did an Abbot, who together tooke the habitt and liued in Religion with such humility, that they gaue euident demonstration to be true contemners of worldly dignities. When their monastery was builded they carryed on their backes, stones, lime, & whatsoeuer was needfull to the workmen. This first prouinciall of England hauing admitted into the Order many yong men, he erected and constituted a place of study, that the Brethren profiting in learning, might also in time benefitt in the gayning of foules: and to that end he prayed master Robert of Osse, Doctour in diuinity to asist in gouernmēt of the schoole of the Religious; which the Doctour with great deuotion accorded vnto, and offered to direct & gouerne them till they had a Religious that could read vnto them. But Br. Angelus retourning one day frō visiting some other monasteries which he had erected in the same Prouince, he thought good to examine the progresse of these yong Religious in their study, and hearing them dispute of curious and frivulous questions, he began to cry out: O miserable wretch that I am what haue I done? sith the simple and idiotes are rauished in God, and these my Religious with their learning call in question, if there be a God: And att the very hower dissolued and discontinued the study, being of opinion that it hindered the repose of the spiritt.

This holy Religious was endued with a profound humility, which made him very gratefull to God and men: It is recorded of him that he would neuer accept the Order of Priesthood till he was constrained by a Generall Chapter: Att length the day after the feast of S. Gregory, the Pope, he yelded his spiritt vnto God. After his death he wrought many miracles, as he had done also in his life-time. He was buried in the Couent of the Frere Minors in the citty of Oxforde, in a coffin of wood, to place him afterward in some honorable sepulcher. Certaine yeares after the people made him a sepulcher of marble, into which attempting to put him, they found in his coffin a liquor like vnto oyle sauouring as baulme; which was his very flesh in that sort melted and dissolued: his precious bones did swimme on the said oyle. The Religious hauing inconsideratly handled the said coffin, thincking to remoue it, the bottom fell to the ground, and that precious liquour ran out with all, yelding to those present so delicious a sauour, that it gaue them all comfort and consolation: and so his bones rested in the new sepulcher, and the sayd oyle was withall care possible gathered vp: and therewith were cured many infirmities.

Of the glorious Br. Ambrosse of Massa.

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Of the glorious Br. Ambrosse of Massa.

Of the conuerſion and ſanctity of the bleſſed Br. Ambroſe.

THE XXXIV. CHAPTER.

Brother Ambroſe was from his birth ſo beloued of the diuine maieſtie, that albeit he conuerſed among worldly men euen to his complet age, yet was he by a ſpeciall grace of God alwayes preſerued from vices and ſinnes: but being by his eternall maieſty induced to ſhunne the ſnares of the deuill, hauing, for the loue of I E S V S C H R I S T giuen all he had to the poore, he in the time of Saint Francis became a Frere Minor; and hauing obtayned of God the grace of contemplation and Euangelicall perfection, he withall his induſtry laboured, that the ſame might not proue vaine and fruitleſſe in him. He therefore much exerciſed himſelfe in the vertue of holy obedience, which is more pleaſing to God then ſacrifices. In the moſt violent and extremeſt cold, being almoſt naked, he trauelled for the neceſſities of the Religious, he continuallie employed himſelfe in prayer, dailie examining his conſcience, for the moſt part his reliefe was only bread and water with abondance of teares, and by ſuch like abſtinence, he mortified the conſcupiſcences of his fleſh, to be able with more puritie to offer vp his ſoule in ſacrifice vnto God. He was exceeding compaſſionate vnto afflicted perſonnes, and with alacrity ſerued the ſicke, not only Religious, but the ſeculer alſo; If there wanted phiſike he demaunded it for the loue of God, as alſo all other thinges neceſſarie: he was very humble, and therefore deſirouſly laboured in the kitchen, waſhed the diſhes, ſwept the houſe, and very willingly buſied himſelfe in all other offices of humility. If by any word or act he had giuen occaſion of troubles to any one, he would preſently put a cord about his owne neck and ſo goe aſke him pardon, though he endured iniuries done to himſelfe as patiently as if no ſuch thinge had bin: he liued fifteene yeares in ſuch and the like exerciſes of vertue; and afterwarde in his death and ſince, God hath diſcouered how gratefull the life of this his ſeruant was vnto him: before his laſt ſickneſſe he reuealed the day of his death and the place, which he declared to one of his companions. He trauelled to Ciuitadochia, where being arriued, he fell ſick, and few dayes after the terme of his life being exſpired, one night att mattins he ſhewed ſuch an extraordinary ioyfull face, as if he had ſome viſion, that made him euen exteriorly to reioyce,

ioyce. Wherefore the Religious that attended him, demanded if he had seene any Angell of heauen, or the holy Father Sainct Francis, he answered that he had not seene the holy Father S. Francis, but of the Angel he sayd nothing. Being in those ioyes, he aduertised his companions of the death of one deuoted vnto him which was reuealed vnto him, saying that William was already departed out of this world vnto almighty God, and that himselfe should follow him the same day betweene none and euenfonge, which came to passe: for att the time foretold this holy Religious Ambrose yelded his soule into the handes of his Creatour.

Of many miracles wrought by this glorious S. Ambrose.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

THe number of miracles, by which our Lord would approue the life and sanctity of his seruant, Brother Ambrose; was such, that Pope Gregory the ninth by an Apostolicall breuie commanded the Bishop of Ciuitadochia, and the Priour of S. Iohn of the Order of S. Augustin to meet, and to examine the life and miracles of the S. and hauing perused them to approue them for autenticall. This Briefe was giuen att the Palace of Lateran, the 13. yeare of his Popedome, by vertue wherof the said Prelates hauing made a most dilligent searce, they found that fourteene lame persons had by the merittes of this seruant of God bin cured, as also foure deliuered of the falling sicknesse, one dispossessed in his life time, and two after his death, six cured of mortall impostumes, and one of a fistula. He restored hearing to one that was deafe, four men were cured of seuerall diseases, a woman of the bloudie flux, and an other whose child had bin foure monethes dead in her wombe: he restored sight to foure that were blind, and finally raysed many from death. The said Prelates tooke notice of these and many other miracles: but the death of the Pope peruerterd his inscription in the catalogue of the SS. in the Church militant, though he were recorded in heauen, where he raigeth with IESVS CHRIST in his Church triumphant, making supplication to his diuine maiesty, for those that in their necessities haue recourse vnto him.

Of the life of Br. Iuniperus, disciple of S. Francis.

Of the exemplarie humilitie and singuler patience of Brother Iuniperus.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

Brother Iuniperus was one of the first and most perfect disciples of S. Francis: for he was so grounded in the firme and assured foundations of humility, patience, contempt of the world and of himselfe, that no tormenting temptations of the deuill, nor persecution of the world could in any sort remoue or desioyne him from his estate of perfection. There was neuer any that saw him troubled or disquieted, so courageously did he support all iniuries of wordes or actions: Which brought him to such misprize of himselfe, that many seeing him in such poore apparance and so ill treated, not knowing his perfection, esteemed him for a foole and sencelesse: But S. Francis that knew him right well, reputing him in the number of the perfect, sayd, that he should be a good and true Frere Minor, that attayned the misprize of the world and of himselfe, so far forth as had done Brother Iuniperus: and oftentimes considering his simplicities, the contempt of himselfe, and patience in reprehensions giuen him, he would say to the Religious present: My Brethren, I desire, and would to God I had a great Forrest full of such Iunipers. This worthy seruant of IESVS CHRIST oftentimes found new occasions for exercise of his patience to be misprised and reproached, yet without offending God, neuer shunning to be reputed a foole: as when he one time entred into the city of Viterbium, hauing made a fardell of his habitt bound vp with his cord which he carryed on his shoulders and so went into the marckett place, where the children seeing him almost naked, vsed him as a foole, reuiled him with wordes, cast stones att him, and berayed him with filth. After he had left these that thus tormented him, he went to the Couent, where the Religious seeing him in such pittifull estate, and vnderstanding by him wherefore he had bin so handled, they were much scandalized att what he had don, and tooke it in very ill part, bitterly reprehending him for it: some told him he deserued to be cudgelled, others, to be imprissoned, others, to be hanged, for the great scandall he had giuen to the people: but he accepted all these indignities with a very contented and ioyfull countenance, as matter much desired of him: and in signification of the interiour contentment he conceaued, he tooke the fore part of his habitt, and beholding those Religious that were most offended with his fact, and rebuked him for it, sayd vnto the, My freindes, fill this I pray you with these iewels: doe so, feare not, for I receaue them as precious stones and iewels that cannot be sufficiently esteem-

esteemed. So called he the affrontes and iniuries done vnto him precious stones and of notable value with God.

An other time being in the citty of Spoletum, he vnderstood that there was a feast to be solemnised att Alsifium, whither would repaire from most parts of the world; & nott minding too loose the gaine he hoped to make there, he determined to goe to the feast in the fashion aforesaid, and being in the citty, he went, expresly to be seene and the more to be mespriled of the people, into the principall streetes: which was presently related to his Brethren, as he well expected. Wherefore being come to the monastery, they all charged him with notable iniuries, calling him foole, and worthy to be layd in irons, for dishonouring their house and Religion: all concluding that he deserved a great penance: Wherevpon, the Guardian, hauing before all the company giuen him a rough and rude chapter, sayd vnto him: O miserable wretch! what pennance can I impole on thee correspondent and worthy the excelsse of thy notorious fact: Herevnto Brother Iuniperus very humbly auisweared: Father the correction you should giue me is, to permitt me to retourne in the same manner I came, and the same way. Herbie the Religious vnderstood well what had bin the cause of his comming, and being qualified and appeased, they prayled God for it.

How Brother Iuniperus abhorred honours, and consolations.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

Brother Iuniperus being sent to Rome there to remayne, where the reputation of his vertues liued, some that were deere freindes to him and deuoted to the Order, vnderstanding therof, went out of the citty to meet him, so to entertayne him curteously and to honour him. But this holy Religious seeing them comming, and suspecting the occasion, which he extremely detested and shunned, he was att the first apprehension exceedingly troubled to resolue on some meane to auoyd that honour. Att leight after he had some time discoursed in his spiritt of this subiect, still going on his way, he found children busied in this sport following: they had layd a peice of wood crosse vpō a wall, att each end wherof was a boy sitting astride, who by equall waight did alternatiuely mount each other vp and downe. Brother Iuniperus gott one of the places and began to sport with the boy att the other end. His freindes and affectionat, comming there, did not yet forbeare very reuerently to salute him, well knowing his fashions and customes: but he persisting firme and constant in his purpose, would

not seeme to see or heare them, so attentiuely did he appeare in that sport; and so long he continued and so resolutely, that trying their patience, he enforced them at last to retourne home much discontented and disedified at the inciuillitie and folly of their freind; and afterwarde he secretly slipt into his Couent, very ioyfull in hauing so auoyded the vaine glory of that worldly entertainment.

An other time he hauing bin against his will commanded to goe to the house of a gentleman that desired much to discourse particularly with him, he was therunto constrained by obedience: but by whatfoeuer means the gentleman could deuise to occasion him to discourse, he could not wrest so much as one good word from him. Yet supposing him to be weary or distempered with some indisposition, he for that night conducted him into a chamber very commodiously furnished for his repose: but very early the next morning, without speaking a word to any person he departed, leauing the bed and other furniture disorderly and confusedly heaped together, to be esteemed a foole. Which the gentleman hauing seene, he was exceedingly confounded and scandalized at this Religious, that thus disgraced him: and complained therof to the other Religious, who exceedingly checked him for it. And then in their presence he reprehended himselfe, acknowledging that he did not only deserue to be rebuked, but also to be severely punished.

Brother Iuniperus discoursing one time with some Religious touching death, one of them said: God graunt, me the grace to dye in some Couent of the Order, in the company of my Brethren, that my soule may be comforted, and assisted by their prayers, and that my body may be buried with other Religious. Herevpon Brother Iuniperus tooke occasion of speech saying; & I would that at the houre of my death my body might be soloathsome and stinking, that no Religious would aduenture to come neere it: but that they would therefore cast me into some priue or smcke, and there leaue me as most abhominable: and afterwarde being dead would not aforde me any buryall, but that foules might deuour my body.

The humility of this holy Religious was so admirable, as also his desire to be misprised for the loue of I E S S C H R I S T, that he could neuer esteeme himselfe in any sort sufficiently burdened with reproches, iniuries, villainies, and infamies, in his life and in his death. In which respect, we may iustly say: *Non est inuentus similis illi*, that more precisely then he obserued to repay this law vnto our Lord, in the same mony and coyne of reproches as he suffered for vs, and with such loue as this holy Religious; and that more euidently discovered in himselfe

helfe the perfection of S. Paul in effect: *Mihi mundus crucifixus est, & ego Galat.* mundo: for he alwayes contemned it withall the pompes and vanities therof, esteeming the world to be but a foole.

Of the remedy which Brother Iuniperus vsed, against the temptations of sensuality.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

BRother Giles, Brother Ruffinus, Brother Simon, and Brother Iuniperus, being on time together in spirituall conference and conuerſation, Brother Giles ſayd to the reſt: My Brethren, I beſeech you tell me, how you arme your ſelues againſt the temptations of ſenſuality. Br. Simon of Aſſium answered: I conſider the loathſomnes of this ſinne, & how deteſtable it is, not only in the preſence of God, but euen before men, who though impious, yet ſeeke to conceale and couer themſelues from being ſeene in the exerciſe of ſuch a filthy act. This conſideration procureth in me a diſpleaſure and deteſtation of this ſinne, and deliuereth me of the temptation. Then Brother Ruffinus ſpake as thus: For my part, when I am tempted with that ſinne, I fall on both my knees vpon the ground, I implore the aſſiſtance of the diuine clemencie, and of the glorious Virgin Mother, and ſo continue in prayer till I feele my ſelfe freed. Brother Iuniperus then ſpake to this purpoſe: When I perceauē ſuch diueliſh temptations are repreſented to my ſenſes forcibly to aſſault me, I inſtanly ſhut the gates of my hart, whereto I conſtitue for ſeuere guardes, holy meditations and pious deſires, for ſecurity of the caſtell wherin reſideth the ſoule: and when their ennemies make their approaches to giue an aſſault to that place, I, that command in that fortereſſe, cry to them from within: Goe your wayes, gett yee gone, the place is poſſeſſed for others; yee are diſcouered, I am fortified with whatſoeuer is neceſſary to giue you repulſe: In this manner doe I euer preſerue my fortereſſe from being ſurpriſed by ſuch baſe companions, who by their entry would vtterly ruinate me: or att leaſt it would be very difficult for me to expell them, for att the inſtant that I perceauē them ready to aſſault me, without permitting them to lay their ſiege, I enforce them to retire with ſhame enough. Which Brother Giles vnderſtanding he tourned to his companions, and ſayd: Brethren, I am of Brother Iuniperus opinion, & reſolue hēceforward to make vſe of his ſtratageme of warre; for it is moſt certaine; conſidering that in this ſinne the ſecureſt fight is to fly; by reaſon that the traiterous appetite which is within the fleſh, findeth ſuch a ſtrōge concurrence of aſſiſtāce in the exterior ſences by an army rayſed

THE CHRONICLES

by the deuill, and opposed against the soule, that the perill is extreme and the victory vncertaine, so that the securest is, not to permitt this traiterous domesticall sinne to enter into our hart.

Iuniperus being one time reprehended for hauing spoaken too lightly, the mouth being the dore wherat the spirit of deuotion and prayer goeth out, he continued six entiere monthes in perpetuall silence: the first day his purpose not to speake was in honour of God the Father, the second for reuerence of the Sonne, the third for loue of the holy Ghost, the fourth for the Queene of heauen, and so each day proposing some saincte, he strictly obserued his silence all that time with new seruour and deuotiō, though naturally he spake very litle, which also was of spirituall things, for as he could not endure to be flattered, so neither could he flatter, and so had no other discourse but of God, and as a Religious perfect in humility, he would rather learne and heare, then with wordes and exteriour signes of sanctity teach others.

Of the great charity Which Br. Iuniperus exercised towards the sick.

THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

THis glorious S. had a great affection to the sick, and with an extreme charity did desirously serue them: by meanes wherof happened a strange accident att our Lady of Angels touching a sicke person, of whome by order of S. Francis who then was there, he had the chardge. This poore sick man was by the continuance of his infirmity become so feeble, that he had not so much strength as to eat, which would infallibly hasten his death: Br. Iuniperus hauing great cōpassiō of him, prayed him with tearfull eyes to tell him wherof he could willinglie ear, and he would procure it for him. The sick party answered that he thought he could well eat of a hogs foote in Vinegar, if he could gett it. Br. Iuniperus replied: be of good Courage Brother, I will presently bring you one dressed as you desire, and taking a great knife out of the kitchen, he went out of the house, and seeing many hogges feeding in a field neere by, he ran so fast after them, that he gott one and cutt off his foot, and therewith retourned to the Couent, where he presently dressed it with vinegar: then carrying it to the sick, he did eat therof with such appetite and courage, that recouering his tast and appetite he began to amend: and by this meane escaped for that time the danger of death. In the meane time the master of the hogges being by his swineheard aduertised, that a Frere Minor had cutt off the foot of one of his hogges, he, puffed vp with choller went hastily to the Couent, where exclaiming as a maded man, he vttered many iniurious speeches

ches to the Religious: and so farre was he transported with fury that he disgordged against them a thousand vilanies. Which the holy Father S. Francis vnderstanding, he went to him and sought to appease him, praying him for the loue of God to haue patience, and offred to repara whatsoeuer damage he had receaued. But the man, more possessed with despight then with the losse, would heare no proposition: but wet away exceedingly scandalized att the Religious, of whome he bruted many lyes through the streetes, and very seriously and vehemently threatned them. These good Religious were in meane while exceedingly greined att this accident, and knew not the cause therof: wherfore hauing long time discoursed vpon it among themselues, they att length addressed themselues to Br. Iuniperus, suspecting that his simplicity and some indiscreet zeale had moued him to this fact. But he respecting onely God, contemned all those toyes and respectes of the world. The holy Father S. Francis called him before him to vnderstand the matter and circumstances: and he very ioyfully recounted vnto him, that God had directed and sent vnto him that hogge for the cure of the poore sicke Brother. Sainct Francis exceedingly admiring sayd vnto him: Ah Brother Iuniperus, you haue this day caused a great scandal: for the master of the hogge hath bin here and in all fury hath giuen vs infinite reproaches: but I acknowledge that he hath reason, and doe feare he will defame vs ouer all the city. Wherfore I command you vpon obedience to run after him, to aske him pardon, and to assure him that he shall be satisfied for his losse, and especially so to deale with him as he be not scandalized att. vs. Brother Iuniperus much admiring that any one should be moued to choller vpon so charitable a worck, considering it to be apparant, that temporall goodes are giue of God but for vie of charity, he answered: Doubt not Father but I will presentlie appease him: in such sort as he shall haue no cause to complaine of such a charity done, as more concerneth God then himselfe. Which sayd, he went in great hast to seeke out the master of the hogge, whome hauing found full of choller, he related vnto him how and for what cause he had curt off his hogges foot: then added that he ought to thanck him, because thereby he had giuen him occasion of meritt in an act so pleasing vnto God as by his meane was accomplished. In meane while the man abused him and grew into such fury, as he was euen ready to strike him: but the good Religious fell at his feet, embraced him, and besought him for the loue of God to pardon him: which manner of proceeding so mollified his hart, that hauing apparantlie seene and perceaued his simplicity, and that what he had done proceeded merely of charitie, and not of malice, or to doe him a mischief, as the deuill had

put in his head, he entred into himselfe, and repented that euer he had iniured the Religious and asked them pardon, acknowledging himselfe auaricious and ingratefull for the benefittes he had receiued of God: in satisfaction wherof, he presentlie killed the hogge: and causing him to be conueniently dressed, he sent him to the Religious, that for the verieloue of God they might eat him in satisfaction of the iniuries vttered against them: and thenceforward was very deuout and liberall to the poore of I E-
SVS CHRIST.

How Brother Iuniperus gaue all he had, and could haue for the loue of God.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

THis holy Religious was so compassionate of the poore, that when he mett any poorely cloathed, he would rip off part of his habitt and giue him: and because he did thus often, and retourned to the Couent halfe naked, his Guardian commanded him vpon obedience no more to giue his habitt nor part thereof. After this commandement meeting a poore wretched creature that asked an almose of him: he, moued with compassion, sayd: I haue nothing to giue thee but this habitt: but I am forbidden vpon obedience to giue it to any: yet if thou wilt take it from me, I promise thee I will not hinder nor resist thee. The poore man vnderstanding these wordes, tooke off his habitt, and left him almost naked: so retourning to his Couent, he told the Religious that a poore man had taken his habitt from him: for which his Guardian knew not what to say vnto him. Now the thirst of charitable worckes being vnquencheable in the seruante of God, this thirst of pittie and compassion so encreased in Brother Iuniperus, that he did not only giue to the poore his habittes: but also, the bookes, the ornamets of the altare, & the cloakes of his Brethren when he could gett them, and that occasion was presented: therfore when the Religious saw any poore demanding almose of Brother Iuniperus, they would hide whatsoeuer was necessarie vnto them. It happened vpon one Christmas day in the Couent of Alsifium, that the Sacristine going to eat, prayed Brother Iuniperus in the meane while to haue care of the altare: before which being in prayer, there came to him a poore old woman, demanding an almose for the loue of God: to whome Brother Iuniperus answered: Mother if you please to expect a litle, I will see if vpon this altare so richlie
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adorned, there be any thing superfluous that I may giue you: and perceiuing siluer frence vpon the ornament of the altare, he tooke his knife and ripped it off, and gaue it to the poore woman, it seeming to him more necessarie to cloath a liuing member of I E S V S C H R I S T then an altare of stone: though in the one and the other the intention be pious for the honour of God: He willed her presently to depart for feare that the Sacristin comming should take it from her. Wherin he did very well, for the Sacristin remembring the quality of Brother Iuniperus had scarce leasure to eat two bittes, but he retourned in great hast to the Church; where looking carefullie if any thing wanted, he missed the frence of the ornament: which much disquieting him, he complayned to Brother Iuniperus, who answered: Brother be not troubled, I haue giuen it to a poore woman that was in extreme necessity. The Sacristine knowing that there was no meane to recouer it, went to complaine to the Generall, who then was Brother Iohn Parent, a very deuout Religious: who answered him, that the fault was his owne, sith knowing the nature of Brother Iuniperus, he had left him to haue care of the altare: Yet intended to reprehend him, so to preuent the like an other time. He therfore did so chapter and check him publikelie in the refectory and with such vehemence, that he got the rheume and pose withall: which more grieved Brother Iuniperus then the reprehension giuen him. Now after he had bin thus humbled, he went into the city to seeke some remedie for his Generall: and it being late before he went forth, att his retourne to the Couent it was night, and the Generall was retired to his cell to repose. But Brother Iuniperus omitted not to goe and knock, praying him to arise and take the medicine he had brought him: and though the Generall diuers times with rude and sharpe wordes reiected him, he neuertheles so long perseuered, that his Generall att length ouercome by his charity, was enforced to open his dore and to take a pottage that he had brought him for phisicke, which presently cured him.

How Brother Iuniperus to confound the Religious of too much care for their food, dressed them att once enough for 15. dayes.

THE XLI. CHAPTER.

BRother Iuniperus was once in a certaine monastery, where all the Religious going vpon occasion abroad, he alone remayned in the
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Covent to haue care of prouiding their supper, which he willingly undertooke. Being then in his care of cookery, he began to consider how much time was lost in dressing of meat, and therefore bethought himselfe and determined to confound them by a new practise: which was he presently went into the city where begging he got great prouision of flesh, as of poultry, veale, mutton, and of cheele, egges, hearbes and pulse of diuers sortes. And hauing borrowed a great cawdron he retourned to the Couent, and putt whatsoeuer was giuen him into it, yea the poultry with their feathers, and putt much wood into the fier to hasten his cookery and to make his meat to boile quickly. Herevpon the Religious retourning from abroad, one of them went incontinently to the kichen, where seeing poore Brother Iuniperus all watered with sweare, labouring exceedingly to farther their refection, with a great and lardge bord in forme of a skreene fastened before him, to keepe himselfe from scorching: and seeing so much flesh, yea the poultry to swimme on that great boyling cawdron, he was so amazed, that without speaking word he ran to fetch his brethren, who comming neere Brother Iuniperus, he sayd vnto them: Be of courage Brethren, I haue here att once dressed you meat for fiteene dayes; that being sufficiently relected, we may haue the more time to spend in prayer. These wordes accompayned with the effect did so confound the Religious, that not knowing what to answer, they went and aduertised the Guardian of what Brother Iuniperus did and would doe, who willed him to be called, and sharply reprehended him for this his folly and wast of meat. But Brother Iuniperus falling to the ground with teares acknowledged, that he deserued not only to be well reprehended, but to be hanged and hewed in peices, more then any malefactor whatsoeuer, sith being in the world he had committed such and such sinne: this he performed with such humility and misprife of himselfe, that the Guardian full of admiration dismissed him; and then to the Religious vsed these wordes: would to God Brother Iuniperus would euery day wast as much meat as this day, on condition we might be so much edified therby as we are att this present.

How Brother Iuniperus was feared of the Devils.

THE XLII. CHAPTER.

BY reason of the great humility and simplicity that was in Brother Iuniperus, the deuils could not endure the vertue of his prayer, yet lesse his presence. It once happened that one possessed trauiailing in the fieldes with some of his freindes, he att their vnawares escaped from them and ran more then two leagues, none of his company hauing

hauing power to follow him. Hauing attlength found him where he stayed, and hauing coniuered him to tell the truth, and the cause of this his sodaine and farre flight, he answered it was by reason of that great foole Brother Iuniperus that came the way directly towards vs: for I cannot endure his presence: they to know if this master Iyer then spake the truth, did curiously search, and found that Brother Iuniperus came that way they were to goe, so that if the possessed had not fled, they had directly mett him. When the possessed personnes were brought to S. Francis if the deuill would not depart, he would thus threaten him: If thou dost not presently depart out of this body, I will send for Brother Iuniperus who shall chastice thee according to thy deserts. The deuill fearing the presence of this holy Religious, would presently flye.

How the deuill attempting to be reuenged on Brother Iuniperus, did maliciously torment him and brought him euen to a gallowes, to hang him.

THE XXXXIII. CHAPTER.

THis great seruant of God was exceedinglie afflicted and tormented by the deuilles, according to their ancient custome to assault and torment the humble, more then all other men, as those whome they know to be most pleasing vnto almighty God. And albeit we find not recorded the secrett and particuler temptations of this holy Religious; yet we cannot doubt but that he hath had exceeding great, sith the deuilles for no other cause feared him, but in regard that he often vanquished them: besides it being manifesttie seene that he could neuer be wearied with iniuries, the more easily by his patience to suppress the pride and arrogancie of the deuill. Yet we obserue a terrible temptation which the deuill weaued against him, which was such as brought him euen to the gallowes ready to be hanged, hauing formerly bin cruelly tormented: wherby may be coniectured what his other temptations were. The matter was thus: Brother Iuniperus being to goe to a castell where there dwelt a noble man very euill minded in regard of his cruelties, called Nicolas, who warred against the inhabitants of Viterbium, the deuill transformed into the shape of a man, went to this noble man, and hauing drawn him a part as to discouer vnto him some secrett of importance, sayd vnto him: My Lord I come to you as your seruant and friend to discouer vnto you that your ennemies of Viterbium haue concluded and determined your death in

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this place and to fier it, that none of your people escape: and to this effect, they haue plotted with a man and committed the chardge vnto him, who is already in the way to attempt it. He is disguised in this manner: his habitt is very bale and contemptible, all torne, on his head he hath a capuce of diuers pieces and patches. Therefore command him to be brought before you, and you shall finde about him a long aule, wherewith to stabbe you, and a fier stone with maches to fier this castell. Which hauing vttered, he was no more seene by the noble man, whose cogitation was only vpon this aduertisement, that did extremely trouble him, as hauing bin deliuered him by so excellent and perfect an Oratour: and he was therewith so terrified that he did shake and tremble with the feare. He forthwith aduertised the guardes of his castell and others whome he sent forth with charge if they found any such and so attired, to apprehend him and warily to bring him to him. Now Brother Iuniperus according to the speciall leaue he had, went alone, and in his way mett with yong idle companions, that as birdes wondred him and pulled him by the capuce, wherof they still roare of some piece, so that by such entreaty and his owne often giuing some litle piacet to the poore, entring into the castell one would haue taken him neither for Religious nor lay person: and being knowne by the description giuen of him, the guardes layd hold of him, and brought him before the noble man, who caused him to be searched, where was found about him the aule wherewith he sowed his sandals, and a fier steele, to strict fier, when he was some time in the forestes in prayer. Being then found with those instrumentes fitt to execute the practise wherof he was accused, they began to torment him, to enforce him to confesse who sent him, and what he pretended to doe: considering withall the whole description of the traytor was approued and confirmed in him. First then his head was bound with grosse cordes fastened with two cudgels, in such sort as they forced and strayned the naturall disposition of the bones (this extreme torment so wrought, that during the rest of his life he had neuer more the head ach) after that he had giuen him infinite strappadoes. Being demaunded who he was, he answered that he was the greatest sinner in the world, and being asked if he came not thither to betray the castell, he answered that he was the greatest traytor that was, being examined if he had not promised and resolved to kill the Lord of the castell: he answered, that he should doe worse, if God would permitt and abandon him. Wherevpon he was att length condemned to be drawne through the citty att a horse taile, so to the place of execution to be hanged and strangled. This worthy mirour of patience Brother

ther Iuniperus, neuer alleadged one excuse or reason to iustifie *More ad-*
 himselfe, nor gaue no demonstration of his disquiett or vexa- *mirable*
 tion: but resigning himselfe entierly to the diuine prouiden- *then imi-*
 ce, shewed in the midst of his torments a ioyfull and con- *table pa-*
 tented countenance. Now as all the people flocked together *tience of*
 to see him trayned through the dirt, and consequently to be *Br. Iu-*
 hanged as a traytor, one of the ministers of iustice, went in- *niperus.*
 continently to the Couent of the Friere Minors of the same
 Citry; and prayed the Guardian to hasten instantly for the re-
 liefe and comfort of the soule of a miserable malefactour that was
 conducted to his execution and death, yet neuertheles hath no appre-
 hension of death, nor hath care or speaketh att all of confession. The
 Guardian speedily hastened to the place of execution, where finding &
 knowing Brother Iuniperus, he began to weepe, and would haue put
 of his habitt to couer him, but he answered, that it was better to co-
 uer a poore liuing creature, then one dead, so little was this holy Re-
 ligious troubled with the tormentes past, the ignominie present, and
 the apprehension of death att hand: but he appeared so cheerfull and
 so pleasant as if he had bin in a faire garden and plott of roses, gil-
 liflowers and other beautifull and sweet flowers. Which the Guar-
 dian admiring, prayed the officers of iustice there present, to suspend
 the execution of this criminell, till he had spoken with their Lord
 whose fauour he would craue in behalfe of him that he knew to be
 innocent, which they willingly promised. Comming then to the no-
 ble man, he thus spake vnto him: Know my Lord, the man whome
 you haue condemned to so ignominious a death, is one of the
 most perfect Religious of our Order of Friere Minors, and is cal-
 led Brother Iuniperus. This extremely vexed this noble man,
 who by reputation knew Brother Iuniperus, hauing heard of
 his meruailes: wherefore he accompanied the Guardian, euen
 to the place of the citty where he was, and there fell on his
 knees before him, and bitterly weeping, besought him before
 all the people to pardon him. The vertuous Religious did not
 only pardon him, but gaue him thanckes for being occasion of
 his meritt towards God, yea and thenceforwd he tooke it so
 gratefully, that remayning in the Couent of the said place
 to cure and ease the torments he had endured, many hono-
 rable personnes presenting him many small commodities, he al-
 wayes sent the most worthie and excellent to the Earle, affirming
 that he did not acknowledge himselfe more obliged to any man in
 the world then to him, because he had not found any that had more
 accomplished his desires then he. The earle, on the contrary said, that he

knew thereby that God would shortly end his enormous finnes, and that he should not liue long, sith he had so vnworthely tormented an innocent and so saint-like a man, though he knew him not, and that God would punish him for it. Wherin he was not deceaued, for a litle after he was slaine by his enemies. Now this singuler fact may notifie vnto vs the patience of Brother Iuniperus, the excellencie of the vertues which God discouered in him, with what faith, hope, humility and fortitude he was armed, and the crosse which he carryed in himselfe, and wherein only he glorified, and the small gaine the deuill gott of him in this combatt, where he was subdued by the patience of Brother Iuniperus, more like to that of IESVS CHRIST, then to that of Iob. Wherein appeareth how truly the holy Doctors affirme, that almighty God is such a louer of our profit and our glory, which is purchaced by labour in his seruice, that he denyeth it onlie to those who make themselues incapable to receaue it.

Of a Companion of Brother Iuniperus, and that was vnder his gouernement.

THE XLIV. CHAPTER.

BRother Iuniperus in his age had a companion, that was so obedient and of such patience, that were he beaten and tormented a whole day together, he would neuer vtter a word of complaint. He was sent to begge att their houses who were knowne not to be charitable, but to be churlish, scoffers, and iniurious to the Religious, whither he would willingly goe, and with an admirable patience support the affrontes and iniuries offered vnto him. If Brother Iuniperus commanded him to weep, he would obey: if he commanded him to laugh, he would incontinently laugh. He being dead, Brother Iuniperus bitterly wept for this his deere companion, affirming that in this life there remayned vnto him nothing of worth, and that in the death of this Brother the world was as it were ruined, so much did he loue and esteeme the vertue of the patience and mortification of this great seruant of God, and his foster child.

How Brother Iuniperus in prayer saw the glory of God, and of his death.

THE XLV. CHAPTER.

After the death of this Religious, the glorious Brother Iuniperus being very vigilant and feruent in prayer and deep contemplation, seemed to hate the world, and already to dye with desire to goe to the other life, such was his endeaour to ascend vnto almighty God. Being one time in the quier att masse, he was so rapt in extasie, that the seruice being ended, the Religious left him alone, where he so remayned a long time, and when he was retourned to himselfe, he came to the Religious, to whome, with a notable seruour of spirit, he vttered these wordes: Ah my Brethren, why doe not we conceaue a pleasure to endure a litle labour and paine, to gaine eternall life? After that he vttered many thinges of high consequence touching the humility, which deserueth the glory of the elect. These wordes gaue sufficient cause to iudge, that he had had some communication of heauen. And in the end the true and worthie disciple of saint Francis and singular freind of sainte Clare, who called him the pastetime of IESVS CHRIST: because she found in him great consolation of spirit, and would haue him neere att her death: this good and holy Religious, I say, after he had many yeares liued in great perfection in this desert, passed from this life to the other, and was by almighty God transported into his glory. He was buried att Rome in the Couent of Araceli.

Br. Iuniperus the pastime of Iesus Christ.

The life of Brother Simon of Afsisum, the Disciple of saint Francis.

Of the holy conuersation of Brother Simon.

THE XLVI. CHAPTER.

Brother Simon of Afsisum was called of God to holy Religion in the life time of S. Francis. This Religious was by the diuine Maiesty endwed with such abundance of grace, and rayled to such a high degree of contemplation, that his whole life was a mirrour of sanctity, and represented to all, the image of the bounty of God, according to the testimony of them that conuersed with him. He rarely went out of his cell, and if sometime he conuersed with his brethren, his discourse was altogether of God. He alwayes sought solitary pla-

ces : and though he had neuer learned the grammer nor other humane sciences , he neuertheless discoursed so sublimely of God and of the most sweet loue of I E S V S C H R I S T , that his wordes seemed rather Angelicall then humane . Brother Iames of Massa and some other Religious, went one euening with him into a wood to discourse of almighty God, and Brother Simon so sweetly discoursed of the diuine loue, that hauing spent all the night in that holy discourse, and the breake of day alreedy appearing, it seemed to them that he did but the begin . When this Religious perceaued the comming of any diuine visitation, he would cast himselfe on his bed as to sleep, or as sicke of the disease of the Elpouse, who sayth in the Canticles : Tell my beloued I languish for his loue . Sometimes in the said diuine visitations he was so eleuated in God, that he remayned insensible of worldly thinges: so that a Religious once desiring to trye whiles he was in extasie, if he had any feeling, tooke a burning coale, and putt it on his bare foot, wherewith he did not only not come to himselfe, nor felt the heat of the fier, but the coaledyed on his foot, without leauing any signe of burning. The Saint accustomed when he did eat with the Religious, to feed them spiritually with the word of God before they receaued their corporall refection.

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How Brother Simon deliuered a Nouice from the temptation of the flesh, and how the Nouice became perfect in charity and of his death.

THE XLVII. CHAPTER.

THis good Father discoursing one day of almighty God, with such seruour declared the obligation which we haue to his diuine Maiesty and to our owne saluation, that a wordly yong man there present, resolu'd to leaue the world and to become religious, (he was borne att Sensfeuerin, a citty in the kingdome of Naples) & forthwith tooke the habitt of Frere a Minor. But the deuill by whose blowing, the flames of temptations are enkindled, enflamed this Nouice with so great a heat and sting of sensuality, that loosing all hope of force to ouercome so great a temptation, he diuers times required his apparell of the sayd Father Simon to retourne to the world, affirming that he could no longer remaine in Relligion : but the good Father comforted him, and still deferred him to an other time. Neuertheless his temptations encreased daily. And as one day he exceedingly vrged him to permitt him to depart out of relligion, this holy Father hauing compassion of him, commanded him to sitt downe

downe by him : which the nouice hauing done, he layd his head on his lappe, then lifting his eyes towardes heauen, he with such seruour prayed for him, that being apt in extasie, he was heard, in such sort that the Nouice was so deliuered of his temptations, that thenceforward his sensuall heat was tourned into the fier of charity, wherof he made demonstration after he had made his vow, by this accident: A lewd fellow was condemned for his misdeedes, to haue his eyes crushed out : this Religious hauing heard report hereof, moued with charity towardes his neighbour, went and most instantly prayed the iudge, to temper iustice with mercy, and to mitigate the sentence giuen against that criminell. The Iudge answered, that he could not. This good Religious then fell on his knees before the Iudge, and with tearfull eyes besought him, that the sentence then might be executed on himselfe, in regard that the party condemned, would not endure the torment nor support the disgrace so patiently as himselfe. The Iudge moued with such wordes, and admiring the Charity of this Religious, pardoned for that time the malefactor. This holy Father being in prayer in a solitary place, many birdes came ouer him and by their singing made so great a noyse, as they distracted him. Wherefore he commanded them in the name of God to depart, and they redily obeyed. The houre of death of this worthy seruant of God being at length come, and his yeares being accomplished, he yelded his soule to his Creatour, adorned with vertues and sanctity. He was buried in the Couent of Spoletum where his notable merittes haue bin manifested, he hauing obtayned many graces of God, for the comfort and benefit of infinitie personnes that haue implored him as their intercessour.

The life of the glorious Father, Brother Christopher

*Of the mortification, charity, abstinence, and affliction of body of
the glorious Brother Christopher.*

THE XLVIII. CHAPTER.

THe venerable Brother Christopher was borne in Romania: he was Preist before he entierly left the world to follow IESVS CHRIST: he was moued thervnto by the example & predication of S. Francis, who hauing admitted him to the habitt and profession of the Frere Minors, sent him into France to the Prouince of Galcone, the year 1219. there to edifie soules and to plant the seed of Religion. This Father was of a profound humility and simplicity & especially pittifull to the afflicted, He succoured assisted and serued the leapers

leapers with great deuotion and dilligence, washing their feet, dressing their soares and vlcers, making their beddes, paring their nayles, and giuing them comfort in all their necessities. But how much he was pittifull in the behalfe of others, as charity commanded him, so much was he seuerer and rigorous to himselfe, weakening him selfe by continuall fastes, and wearing a grosse hairecloth, hauing besides for a long time worne a coat of maile the more to torment his flesh. His perseuerance in rigour of life was, such that being an hundred yeares old he did eat but once a day, except the sondayes and principall feastes of the yeare, so that albeit his body grew old and decayed, he was neuertheles alwayes yong and firme in vertues. Norwithstanding such mortifications and abstinences he had a face very cheerfull, for the interiour ioy shined and appeared exteriorly, and the most sweet and gracious loue of his hart towards his God, made all the afflictions sweet which his body endured.

Of the diuine consolations which he receaued in prayer and att Masse.

THE XLIX. CHAPTER.

THis holy Religious neuer spent his time idly, but euer employed himselfe either in prayer, or reading, or in manuall exercise in the garden, or in some other seruice necessary to religion. He was very dilligent in prayer, and had the grace of shedding many teares. And that he might the more commodiously apply himselfe to prayer, he made choice of a very litle cell, made of earth and boughes of trees separate from the others, wherein he spent most of his time (which was a thing in manner generall to the first Fathers of that time) and there was he often visited diuinely: as also the glorious Virgin Mary appeared vnto him one time with her mother S. Anne, & comforted him that was particularly deuout vnto them. He euery day said masse with great deuotion and abundance of teares: which was very gratefull to I E V S C H R I S T, as by the sequell appeareth. This venerable Brother saying masse one morning, one of the candels on the altare was casually putt out, and there was seene a light instantly to disceind from heaven that lightened it againe. There was often seene a white pigeon houering ouer his head whiles he said masse: the Religious that serued and alsisted him did often see it, he was a yong man very neat, and an innocent discipule of his, called Brother Peter, who hauing forsaken his kinred, his friendes, his patrimony and all the world besides (on whose fallacious and deceitfull appearances he would not relye) entred into the Religion of Friere Minors, where

where he ascended to such sanctity, that in regard of his pure simplicity he merited often times to see and speake with his good Angell Gardien. The first time that he saw the pigeon discend vpon the head of the glorious Br. Christopher, not knowing what it signified, he sought to driue it away, wherein he exceedingly troubled his master, who was enforced to will him to lett it alone, and therby it was knowne what it was. This venerable Father one time calling to minde his sinnes committed in the world; extremely feared the punishment they deserued, conformably to that which the scripture sayth: *Happy is he that alwayes feareth*, and therefore he prayed this Angelicall yong man Br. Peter whole conscience he knew very well, to demaund of his famelier Angell, his estate touching his former sinnes: who made him this answere: Tell Brother Christopher he need not feare his sinnes past, because God hath pardoned them entierly. But lett him striue to perseuer in his good worckes begun, that he may meritt eternall life.

The rest of this Chapter is inserted in the end of the 71. chapter of the second booke, being a vision that this holy Father had of the death of Saint Francis.

Of some miracles wrought by this glorious Br. Christopher in his life time.

THE L. CHAPTER.

ALthough this holy mā did not publikely ascend into the pulpit to preach the word of God: yet did he deliuer it to such people as he conuersed withall, giuing them profitable admonitions accompanied with seuerer reprehensions: so that according to the etymologie of his name, he carryed IESVS CHRIST in his body by penance, in his hart by feruent prayers, and in his mouth by diuine prayes and wordes of his law, which he imprinted in the memory of sinners: And God, by many miracles which he wrought by him, would demonstrate, how gratefull his worckes were vnto him, and of what vertue and efficacie his prayers were before his diuine maiesty.

Being in the city of Cahors in France, a child of eight yeares old, called Remond, afflicted with so greiuous a disease that he was esteemed neere his end, S. Christopher, att the instancie of his mother prayed for him, and hauing made the signe of the crosse and layd his hand vppō the child, he presently spake calling his mother, who came with great ioy and gaue him to eat, and so by the prayer of this holy Religious, against all humane hope and apparance he was cured.

In the same city an other child called Peter could not moue his right

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arme nor his foot, and besides had almost lost his sight, so that he was generally iudged as dead. This holy Father att the request of the mother came to visitt him, and read the gospell ouer him, then made the signe of the crosse from his head to his feet, and the child was instantlie cured.

A man of the same citty, hauing bin long time afflicted with the falling sicknes, prayed the holy Father to giue him his benediction, which hauing receaued, he was entierly cured of the said infirmity.

A woman of Sauueterre in the same citty was exceedinglie vexed with a sieuer, and hauing great deuotion to the holy Father, she sent vnto him to come visitt her: which he hauing performed and prayed for her, she was cured by the signe of the crosse.

A Priest that was very sicke, drincking of the holy water giuen him by Br. Christopher that visited him, was instantly cured.

Againe in the Bishopprick of Cahors a woman hauing left her child in the field whiles she was reaping corne, by a sodaine sinister accident he became dumme. The mother hauing carryed him to diuers churches, & recommended him to God by the inuocation of many sainctes, the child found no cure. Att length full of confidence and deuotion she presented him to this holy Father, who hauing made his prayer, and the signe of the crosse vpon him, he restored him to his mother speaking as before: and shee giuing thanckes to God and his seruant, retourned full of consolation vnto her house.

Of the spirit of prophetic, and of some other miracles wrought by this glorious seruant of Iesus Christ.

THE LI. CHAPTER.

THere was without the citty of Cahors a very high mountaine, by which this holy Father passing one day, he saw many men and women on the banck of the riuer that ran vnder the sayd mountaine, employed in diuers actions. Br. Christopher sayd vnto the: Fly ye all from this place, and that instantly: for the mountaine will incontinently fall: some of them, seeing no appearance, laughed first att this admonition. Yet the sanctity of this good Father being manifestly knowen, they all retired from that place, which they had scarcely done, but a great part of the mountaine fell downe without hurting any person: wherefore they all gaue thanckes to God for the benefitt receaued, and were the more deuout vnto this sainct.

A woman of the sayd citty hauing bin afflicted with a longe infirmity, was visited by the sainct; whome she prayed to obtaine of God
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for her, either that he would please to restore her health, or by death to deliuer her from such extreme anguishes. This holy Father answered her: feare not, but take courage my daughter, for on such a day att the third houre thou shalt depart out of this life. On the sayd day he expressly retourned att the same houre: w home she seeing, sayd vnto him: Father that which you told me seemeth not to be accomplished, he replied: doubt not my daughter, for it shall incontinently be accomplished, as in deed it was. For as they did ring att the third houre, this woman being cōfessed and hauing performed what belonged to a Christian, in the presence of this holy Father and of many others, yelded her spirit to our Sauour.

This seruant of God in Marseliles saw two men in guise of Phisicians comming to visit one that was sicke: but knowing in spirit that this sick person was in estate of mortall sinne, and that the seeming Phisicians were two deuils, he made the signe of the crosse against them, and they instantly vanished: then the holy Father admonishing the sick party, he sincerely confessed his sinnes, and being contrite and comforted with a quiett conscience, he happely departed from this life to a better.

In the sayd city a good deuout woman, had a very auaricious husband and sparing in worckes of mercy: whervpon she complayned to this holy Father that she had nothing to giue in almose but wine. The S. bid her giue securely of that wine for the loue of God. This woman obeyed him, giuing therof to all poore that had need, in such sort that there was not much left in the vessell, her husband drincking, knew by the tast of this wine that it was very low and neere the lyes; wherfore he grew into choler with his wife, examining her what was become of his wine: she full of trembling answered that there was yet much in the vessell. The husband sent his seruant to be truely enformed what quantiry was left: she found the vessell full euen to the bung: wherof she with great ioy incontinently aduertised her master, which reuiued the soule of his wife, that was dying with feare, and thervpon she boldly recounted all to her husband, who resolued thenceforward to be more charitable towards the poore; attributing the present miracle to the merittes of the glorious Br. Christopher and to the vertue of charity, whose worckes our Lord doth not only recompence in the other world, but euen in this also.

Of the glorious death of Br. Christopher.

THE LII. CHAPTER.

After that almighty God had ennobled and enriched his seruant Christopher with many merittes and miracles, and by the exam-
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ple of his holy life, had singularly planted the rule and Order of the Frere Minors in diuers places of France, where he caused the erecting of many Couents which he furnished with Religious of holy life and exemplare conuersation: he would att length recompence him with eternall reward, as he ordinarily doth those that faithfully labour in the vineyard of his holy Church. The night when he passed from this miserable life to that which is blessed, all the Religious being assembled about his bed, he made them a long discourse of the kingdome of God, exhorting them to perseuer with purity in his holy seruice; they then demanded his benediction, which he gaue them very affectionatly, in the name of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST, then recommending his spiritt to his Creator, he rendred it vnto him; and his body remayned so religiously composed, that he seemed to sleep. He dyed in the citty of Cahors, the yeare of grace 1272. (hauing spent fifteen yeares in the Order of the Frere Minors) att six of the clock att night the Eue of Al-faintes, to reigne eternally with them. Att the very houre of his death, two Religious women ancient both in Relligion and vertues, did testifie to haue heard Angelicall musike exceedingly mellodious, accompanying the soule of this worthy seruant of God, vnto heauen. A man of the third Order, & of that citty, in a vision saw the soule of this glorious Father att the hower of his departure, caried by Angels with great ioy into Paradise. The same night a Burgesse of Cahors called Peter, saw in vision the soule of this holy Father sitting on a very resplendant couch that did spread and sparckle glittering beames as the sunne: of whome demanding who he was, I am said he, the soule of Br. Christopher, that haue left my body on earth and am goeing to heauen. This man suddenly awaked, and arising, likewise awakened all his familie to whome he recounted his vision; then went to the monastery where he found the body of the holy Father already according to the custome, caried into the Church, thence to be enterred elsewhere. The day following, the death of this holy Father being diuulged, there repayred such a cōcourse of people to see this blessed body, that he could not be taken out of the handes of those that desired to touch him, to kisse & teare off part of his habitt to keepe for reliques, and to demanda some grace of God by the merittes of him that had worne it. This body being with much a doe att length takē out of the Church, & embalmed with precious liquours and aromaticall oyntments, it was on the third day putt in a coffin of wood, and enterred in the Church of the Frere Minors, with great solemnity and reuerence.

Of the dead rayſed, by the inuocation of this ſainct.

THE LIII. CHAPTER.

Almighty God voutſafed alſo to demõſtrate the exceeding great miracles which by the merittes of this his gratefull ſervant he wrought in the biſhopprick of Cahors: for a mother hauing caſually left her child vpon a bridge, he fell into the water and was drowned. The mother ſeeing her child dead, filled all the village with compaſſion of the ſorrow and grieve which by her extreme lamentation ſhe did diſcouer. Att length ſhe had recourſe to S. Chriſtopher, to whome ſhe vowed to viſit his ſepulcher and to preſent vnto it an image of waxe if he would raiſe her ſonne. The vow being made, the child began to moue his lippes, then to open his eyes, and by the merittes of ſuch an interceſſour in preſence of many people, he returned to life and ſafety.

A creature being wreſted dead out of the mothers wombe, was reſtored to life by the prayers and interceſſions of this ſainct, who was exceedingly importuned and induced therunto by thoſe that were preſent.

In the ſame city, a mother had layd her child of two yeares old in bed betweene her husband and her ſelfe: but awaking ſhe found the child ſmothered and dead: after many regreets ſhe made vow to S. Chriſtopher, that if by his interceſſion the child might reuiue, ſhe would carrie it to his ſepulcher, and there would preſent a light and image of waxe. Which vow being made the child began to gape, then to moue the armes, and att length opening his eyes it returned to life.

In the ſame city and after the ſame manner, the S. being inuocated, for a dead child by the father who was deuout vnto him, in theſe tearmes: O ſaint of God rayſe my daughter and I promiſe thee to carry her to thy ſepulcher, where I will offer there an altare cloth and an image of waxe; ſhe vpon this vow returned to life, and the Father and others preſent gaue thanks to almighty God and to the S. In a towne called Concet neere to the ſaid city, there was a young man ſo weakened with a continuall feauer, that he was generally eſteemed for dead, no motion could be perceaued in him not ſo much as of his pulſe: wherefore his mother in extreme affliction, perceauing all humane helpe to faile, had recourſe to almighty God, whome ſhe inuocated by the merittes of S. Chriſtopher, of whome ſhe had heard many miracles recounted, to reſtore her ſonnes health; vowing, to carry him to his ſepulcher, & there to preſent an altare cloth and an image of wax. The effect was admirable

able, for the presenting of her vow being finished he began to amend, and in short time was entirely cured, to the great astonishment and content of all his friendes and kinred, who sayled not to giue thanckes to God and to accomplish their vow.

Health was also restored to an other yong man called Iohn, desperately sick att Cahors in the manner aforesayd.

A Relligious of the Order of S. Clare called Sister Mary, being so extremely weakened with sicknes that she could not remoue her selfe in her bed, nor much lesse take her rest therein, she expected only death: but hauing heard it reported that the holy Father Christopher was deceased, and that he wrought infinite miracles, she bitterly lamenting presented vnto him this request. O holy Father that hast often heard my confession, pray vnto almighty God if thou please, that I may recouer my health, to serue him. Which spoaken she fell into a sweet sleep, from whence the next morning she awakened full of comfort and consolation, and went to the quier to communicate with her other sisters, who theratt were much amazed: and afterwarde they all together gaue thanckes to the omnipotent bounty of God and to his holy intercessour, by whose merittes he so compassionatly assisteth those that addresse their petitions vnto him.

Of other miracles wrought in the cure of many dangerous and incurable diseases.

THE LIV. CHAPTER.

VPon the Mount Abban in the bishopprick of Cahors, a child reduced neere vnto death, and his mother extremely afflicted by dispaire of her sonnes recouery; which hauing exceedingly weakened her by the great wearines of labour that this sicknesse cau- ter her, she fell into a litle sleep, wherein she heard a voice that sayd vnto her: Woman feare no more, but make a vow for thy sonne to S. Christopher, and God by his merittes will cure him. This woman awaking, and hauing made her vow, her sonne was cured, and the mother carried him to the sepulcher of the saint, wher she thancked God and her Intercessour for it.

A woman of the said citty of Cahors called Valeria, was so sick that the Phisitians iudged her as dead, and withall had already lost her speech and the motion of all her members, and was as black as pitch, a priest also comming to heare her confession, was constrained to retourne without vsing his function: for she could neither speake, heare, nor make any signes. But her kinred and freindes that were present, grieved att the

the losse of a woman whome they cordially loued, fell deuoutly on their knees, lifted vp their ioyned handes, their contenances, and their prayers towards heauen, and recommended her to the merittes of the holy Br. Christopher: and presently the sick woman began to speake and to praise God in his seruant, who had deliuered her from the perill of death, and restored her perfect health.

A Priest called Gessry, being by the Phisitions forsaken as dead, and hauing already for the space of two dayes lost his speech, a sister of his praying to the S. for him, he began to speake, and after ward was perfectly cured.

A woman so lamed in her handes and feet that she could hardly goe with cruches, fell on her knees neere the sepulcher of the S. and there prayed him to obtaine her cure, vowing vnto him a foot and hand of wax. Her prayer and vow being ended, she was entierly cured, and went ioyfully with other women to carry lime and brick, to finish the sepulcher of the saint.

A yong man called Arnold was borne with his feet so crooked and wrested that they could not support him: his parentes vowed for him to the holy seruant of God, affirming that they would really acknowledge him for a saint if he would cure the lame party, who, to the exceeding amazement of those present, stood vpright, sound and ioyfull, and his father himselve conducted him to visit his sepulcher, publicly denouncing the grace and fauour which our Lord had done him, by the merittes of this glorious Intercessour. There are found recorded many other miracles which God wrought by the merites of his holy seruant Br. Christopher, deliuering many from death that were desperately sick, restoring sight to the blind, curing feiuers, goutes, fistulaes, and other infirmities, restoring speech to the dumme, hearing to the deafe, and finally relieuing all that by his merittes inuocated almighty God. But to auoyd prolixity I forbear heare to deduce them, esteeming the preadged sufficient to occasion the faithfull to belieue the sanctitye of this seruant of IESVS CHRIST. The miracle following shalbe for the incredulous only: A man called Ratier, being by chaunce neere vnto the sepulcher of this S. and hearing his miracles related: I cannot belieue, said he, that a man whome I haue seene in these dayes can worck miracles. Those present hauing reprehended him, he would not acknowledge his error, wherefore he deserued to be chastised of God, as he was, thereby to make him know his temerity. For departing thence he had scarcely recouered his home but he felt himselve surprised with a vehement feiuer, the affliction wherof opening his vnderstanding, he also called to minde the arrogancie and temerity of his wordes, which he exceedingly repented, saying: O S. Christopher, pardon me, and assise
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me I beseech thee, I confesse thou wert and art a S. and in the vertue of God canst worck miracles, to whome thou hast bin so faithfull and obedient a seruant: I promise thee, if thou please to restore vnto me my health, I will presently visit thy sepulcher, there to giue thee thanckes. This vow being made, he was instantly cured, and arose sound from his bedd, and went to accomplish his vow, giuing thanckes to God and to his holy seruant: and thenceforward he became a faithfull Professour & proclamer of the sanctity of the blessed Father Christopher.

A summarie of the life of some other disciples of the holy Father S. Francis.

THE LV. CHAPTER.

IT would be a matter ouer tedious both to read, and to write the liues of all the disciples and companions of S. Francis, wherewith, as so many precious stones adorned with many graces and vertues, the said holy Father began to build his Euangelicall religion: considering withall that we haue not such authentically relation of their liues & miracles as is requisite and necessary. In respect wherof we doe not make a particular relation of each of them; but will recount somewhat of certaine of them who haue so spent their time, that albeit their fame be not equall to the aforementioned, yet are they not of lesse sanctity and glory before God. The first of whome is the glorious Br. Peter Catanus the second disciple of S. Francis, and his first Vicar Generall, who was an eye witnesse of many Mysteries that almighty God communicated vnto him, as in his life we haue recorded. This holy Religious being dead, God had already began by his intercession to worck many miracles, when the holy Father S. Francis hauing commanded him to forbear the obtayning of such miraculous graces from God, his miracles ceased, as hath bin amply discoursed in the hundredth chapter of the first booke, where is likewise related wherfore he was made Vicar Generall.

Brother Angelus of Rieta was the first knight that entred this religiō, and was one of the twelue first disciples of S. Francis, and his companion in many worthy mysteries and miracles. The holy Father put from this good Religious an extreme feare which he had of the deuils, in such sort that he durst not continue alone att his prayers by night: for he commanded him to goe about midnight to the toppe of a high mountaine, and there aloud to crye out these wordes: yee proud deuils, come ye all now to me, and doe the worst you can: which hauing by due obedience performed, none of the deuils euer after came to annoy him, so that he was entierly freed of the sayd feare. And being fully perfected

sted in vertues and prayer, he passed from this life to God, and was buried att Afsissium, with other companions of S. Francis.

Br. William an Englishman, was admitted in the number of the first twelve Disciples of S. Francis, in the place of Br. Iohn Chappell, that was an Apostata, and did hang himselfe as Iudas had done. The miracles wrought by this blessed Br. William in his sepulcher, haue sufficiently testified what he was: for almighty God by his merites there wrought so many, that he seemed to obicure the glory of his Father S. Francis, by whome he was buried: and therefore Br. Helie who then was Generall of the Order, went to his tombe, and commanded him by holy obedience to forbear working any more miracles.

Br. Moricke, who was first Religious of the Order of the Porte-Croix or Crosse-bearers, was eminent vnder the discipline of the holy Father S. Francis, and was most famous for his admirable abstinence, and for a long space woare on his flesh an iron shirt, did eate no bread, but only hearbes and rawe pulse; he neuer woare coat, but the only habitt during his life, and att his death he left many signes of his sanctity and perfect life.

Br. Benett of Arezzo was also perfect in all vertues. S. Francis sent him to be Prouinciall att Antioch. There are strange matters recounted of this Religious, which being difficult to be belieued, and not being satisfied by the testimony of the writer, I haue thought it best not to record them here, for feare that they appearing indeed doubtfully, the like iudgement should be giuen of others here recorded that are most certaine and indubitable.

It shall therefore suffice, to know, that this blessed Father had the spirit of prophesie, as they testifie who knew him: and that hauing persevered in sanctity of life, he reposed in peace. He was buried in Arezzo his owne country, whither, it is held that he brought from Babilon, one of the fingers of the holy Prophet Daniel.

Br. Peregrinus of Faleron was admitted to the religion of the holy Father S. Francis, who prophesied vnto him, that albeit he weere learned, he should notwithstanding apply himselfe to the actiue life, and his companion to the contemplatiue, and so it arriued, for he was a lay brother: for which humility, he obtayned of God an exceeding great perfection in vertues, and particularly the grace of compunction and the loue of God; for whose sake desiring martyrdom, he went to Ierusalem, where he visited all the holy places, with such deuotion, teares, embracings and most tender louing kisses, that in those places he adored our Saviour as present. Br. Bernard Quintaualle affirmed of this Religious, that he was one of the most perfect of the world. And as he was by name a Stranger, so was he also in his life: for the loue of IE-

SVS CHRIST was so burning in his hart, that he neuer permitted any other thing to rest there: but alwayes walked and sighed towards heauen: thus did he ascend from vertue to vertue, in such sort that he was exceedingly illuminated in his life, and in his death, by diuers miracles.

Br. Ricerio employed himselfe in the contemplatiue life, according to the prophesie of S. Francis; which made him familer vnto him, and he instructed him in many diuine verities, he made him Prouinciall of the marquise of Ancona; many matters concerning this holy Religious are recorded in the life of S. Francis.

Br. Augustin of Alsifium, Prouinciall of the land of Labour, commonly called Naples, was a Religious of such sanctity, that he merited, not only to be companion in life and profession with S. Francis, but also in his death and glory: for hauing in his last sicknes already lost his speech, he saw the soule of S. Francis ascend vnto heauen, which encouraged him to cry out: Stay holy Father, stay for me: and his soule forthwith leauing his body, it accompanied that of his blessed Father to eternall glory.

Br. Roger the disciple of S. Francis, was of such sanctity, that Pope Gregorie the ninth approued him for a S. & permitted commemoration to be made of him in the Couēt of the Frere Minors of Tiouoly; but because he was not canonized with the accustomed solēnities, the Religious neuer durst keep his solēne feast. He was not canonized because the examē of his miracles, appointed by the said Pope, was neuer accomplished.

Brother Philippe the Long, was also disciple of S. Francis. He was the first Confellour, Visitour and Minister of the Religious of S. Clare. It is found recorded of this S. that an Angell purged his lippes, touching them with a burning coale, as the Seraphin did to the Prophett Elsaye, which was not a litle necessary to him that was to administer the word of God vnto Religious women.

Br. Barbarus, Br. Iohn of S. Constantin, and Br. Bernard of Viridante, that were of the first companions of S. Francis, were exceeding eminent in their vertuous and merueillous actions; as their worckes were written in the booke of life, so their soules for euer liue in glory, & their bodyes are buried in the Couent of S. Francis att Alsifium.

Br. Pacificus, companion of the holy Father, was of such perfection that he merited to see many merueillous worckes, which our Lord secretly wrought in his seruant S. Francis, and because the glorious S. knew his perfection and sanctity, he sent him Prouinciall into Frâce, where he remayned diuers yeares, then dyed and was buried att Laon.

The end of the sixt booke, of the second volume and first part of the Chronicles of the Frere Minors, wherein particuler mention is made of 25. disciples of the holy Father S. Francis, all of very singular sanctity of life, & of worthy miracles.

THE



THE SEAVENTH BOOKE
OF THE SECOND VOLVME AND FIRST PART
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS,

WHERIN IS CONTAINED THE LIFE AND
admirable doctrine of Br. Giles of Alsifium, a Religious of
great perfection, who was the third Disciple of S.
Francis. Translated as before.

Of the conuersion of Brother Giles to the Religion of the Freve Minors.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



ALBEIT to read or heare the liues of all or any
sainctes, exceedingly dispose the spirittes to the
contempt of temporall pleasures and induce them
to purchase true and eternall richesse: yet it cannot
be denied but that the life of some one more then
an other doth cause these effectes, as I hope this en-
suyng shall proue of the glorious Brother Giles of
Alsifium, who was the thurd that followed S. Fran-
cis: whose life being of singuler note, it is requisite it should be descri-
bed more att lardge. The time employed in reading therof shall not be
wasted: for the soules therby shalbe enriched with holy doctrines, with
diuine examples and documents. But I omitte to recount his conuer-
sion, it being already handled in the ninth chapter of the first booke and
first volume of this present part.

*How Brother Giles went to visit the reliques of S. Iames in Galicia,
and the holy Sepulcher of our Redeemer Iesus Christ in Hierusalem.*

THE II. CHAPTER.

IT was the custome of the first Fathers of this Order, to goe often in pilgrimage, not to seeke their more liberty, nor to satisfie their appetite with better cheere, but for the exercise of perfection, and to suffer hungar, thirst, cold, heate, and the affontes which they often endured, as vnknowne in that new habitt, and so did they dispose themselves to the incommodities of obedience, and were courageous: for they went barefoot, withone single habit, without wallers, edifying themselves in patience, and their neighbour in charitie. Now Brother Giles hauing gotten leaue of the holy Father S. Francis he went to visit the church of S. Iames of Compostella, in which voyage he did not so much as once satisfie his hungar, such a desire had he to feele in himselfe the force of pouerty for the loue of IESVS CHRIST. Finding one day no meane to gett so much as bread (wherwith only he liued) hauing found in a barne certaine huskes of beanes left there after the threshing, he did eat them with great appetite, and after tooke his rest in the same place. The next morning he arose very early, as cheerfull and well disposed as if he had eaten the best and most delicate foode in the world. He was thus accustomed to suffer, being often in forrestes and solitary places, which were more to his content then the conuersation of the world, as lesse subiect to distractions in his spirituall exercises, and more commodious for spending the night in watching and prayer. In this iorney meeting with a poore sick creature full of soares, and not knowing what to giue him, he ript of his capuce and gaue it vnto him: but this charity enforced him to trauell twenty dayes bare-headed, till att last was giuen him cloth to make an other, and so did he walke with a habitt, according to the common fashion of his Order, deformed, but entirely conformable to the charity of the gospell. Being in Lombardie, he was called by a man, of whome he thought to receaue a charitie, but comming to him, he tooke out a paire of dice, and demanded if he would play with him: So did the wretch flout att this good Religious, who went on bowing downe his head without replying a word. In this sort he was often the obiect of laughter vnto the sloathfull and idle companions, that made him their scorn, which he alwayes endured with patience correspondent. After he had also visited all the holy land, expecting commodity of shipping to re-
tourne

tourne into Italy, it being necessary for him to liue vpon his labour as hauing no mony, he carryed water to passengers, for which seruice they gaue him bread, and remayning certaine dayes in the citty of Ason, he employed himselfe in the labour of his handes making baskettes and cases of ozier, and such litle conceates, wherwith he liued; and if he wanted either worck or matter, or knew not wherin to employ himselfe, according to the diuers occasions of the places where he rested, his last refuge was to haue recourse to the abundant table of God, demaunding almosse att the peoples dores, according to the documentes of his rule. He went also to visit the mount saint Michael, then saint Nicholas of Bar; and in all thesē voyages into whatsoeuer place he entred, he exhorted those that he found, to doe pennance for their sinnes, and to apply themselues to the seruice of God the bountifull giuer of all goodnes, and to doe this in loue and charity towards their neighbour. As he one day trauailed, he became so weary and so oppressed with hungar, that he was enforced to rest himselfe, and with wearines he fell a sleepe. As he awaked he found by him halfe a loafe which God had sent him of almosse, which he ioyfully did eat, thancking his diuine maiesty: and being by meane of this celestiall bread recomforted, he cheerfully proceeded on his iorney.

How this seruant of God endeauoured to gaine his liuing by the worck and labour of his handes.

THE III. CHAPTER.

S. Francis hauing sent him to remayne att Rome, therby the better to satishe his desire, which was to liue vpon his labour, he went to a mountaine three leagues distant whence he brought wood to the citty: and for the price therof he was content with the gift of bread for his one dayes sustenance. He brought wood to a woman, who knowing him to be Religious would giue him a greater hire then was conditioned, but Brother Giles for the same cause (to witt for the loue of God) would not accept it, affirming that he would not be vanquished by auarice, wherwith this woman was exceedingly edified. He disdayned not to vndertake any seruice that might be required of him, provided that it exceeded not the limites of modesty; and to misprising the vanities of the world, he perfected and refined himselfe in mortification and humility. Assisting some others one time to gather nuttes, and his dayes labour being ended he was payed in nuttes, which being vnable to hold in his slee-

ues, he putt off his habitt, and tyed the two endes of his sleeues which he filled euen to the capuce, and so carryed them to Rome, where he diuided them among the poore: to conclude hauing imparted some share of his gaine to the Religious, he also gaue part vnto the poore.

Sometime he tooke of the water of S. Sixtus and carryed to the Religious of Quatuor Coronatorum, who gladly drانck therof, and for the same gaue him bread, wherewith he liued, and what remayned he distributed vnto the poore. As he one day carryed water to the sayd Religious, a poore man in the way demaunded of him to drانck, and he gaue him therof: but vnwilling that the Religious should haue the rest, he retourned to draw more att the fountaine which was a league distant, such was his desire with his possibility to giue each one contentment. When any one hired him and entertayned him to day-labour, he alwayes conditionally reserued time requisite with attention to say his canonicall howers, and certaine other suffrages and deuotions. He was very carefull to shunne idlenes, and therefore he alwayes either spake of God, or prayed and contemplated, or vsed some handy labour in some litle matter of vtility; whence proceeded, that loosing no part of his time, he sufficiently provided both for his soule and and body.

The Pope being att Rieta, the Cardinall Nicolas Bishop of Toscolan, desiring to haue Brother Giles in his company, out of great respect he had to his simplicity and sanctity, he instantly prayed him to seiorne certaines dayes with him, and to be content to eat as he did att his table, forbearing to seek almosse otherwhere: But Brother Giles willingly promising to remayne in his house, would not yeld to eat of that he found there, and so went thither. Now the Cardinall complayning vnto him for that he would not eat of his bread, Brother Giles answered with this verse of Dauid: *Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis beatus es & benetibi erit.* The Cardidall not knowing what to reply, prayed him att least to eat that which he receaued of his almosse, or of his labour with his companion, which he promised to doe: and then- ceforward he brought his begged bread to the Cardinals table, where he did eat it, and if any remayned he gaue it to the poore. But there falling one day such a raine that Brother Giles could not goe abroad either to labour or to seeke almosse, the Cardinall was very ioyfull therof, hoping that day to haue his desire, and that Brother Giles would eat of his bread: but he was deceaued, for Brother Giles exceedingly troubled for that he could not gaine his bread, bethought himselfe and went into the kitchin, where asking the Cooke wherfore his kitchin lay so vncleanly, offered to sweepe it for the gift of two loaves: which hauing gotten, he went to eat the said bread with the Cardinall; who was againe

againē decaued the morning following, when as it rained extremely, for Brother Giles vnable to goe abroad, found meane for bread to make cleane the dishes, which made the Cardinall admire his firme resolution to liue poorly, more then yet he had done.

How our Lord releued Brother Giles in an extreme necessitie.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Brother Giles hauing thus seiourned a certaine time in the Cardinals house, the time of Lent drawing very neere, he determined to retire with his companion, into some solitary place, where his spirit might contemplate in entiere repose: and to this effect tooke leaue of this Cardinal, who therewith exceedingly afflicted sayd vnto him: Alas my deere freind whither goest thou, as a bird without a nest? But this good Religious ascended vp to a mountaine, where he found a litle chappell (hauing bin an hermitage) called S. Laurence, farre distant from habitation, and consequently very solitary: there he resolved to spend his lent, but three dayes after he was there arriued, it did so snow and freeze, that they could not possibly goe abroad. The holy Religious seeing there was no meane to goe forth to seeke bread, sayd to his companion: Brother lett vs make petition to almighty God that he will please in our necessity to send vs bread, sith there is none but he that can heare and releiue vs. Then he recounted an history of certaine Religious, who wanting bread in the like necessity, had recourse to him and were heard. Being moued by such an example, they began on the euenning to pray with loud voice vnto almighty God, & so persevered till the breake of the day following, when as God inspired a good man of a neighbouring place, who seeing the snow so extreme, called to minde that he had seene att other times Hermites att S. Laurence, & thought with himselfe, that if then there were any there, they could not come forth to seeke food; which mouing him to compassion he went out of his house with bread and wine, which he gaue to the Religious, and being returned to his house, he aduertised his neighbours and friendes of the necessity of the said seruantes of God, and so procured that they wanted not wherewith to liue the rest of the lent, which happened to good purpose for them in regard of their extreme necessity. Br. Giles desirous to acknowledge the great charity vsed vnto him by those people, he said to his companion: hitherto we haue prayed to God for our selues, to be releued in our necessity: henceforward we ought to pray vnto him for our benefactors; so that persisting night and day in these petitions, our Lord bestowed such graces
and

and fauours on the inhabitantes of that place, that neuer Frere Minor hauing bin formely seene there, many among them neuertheles being moued by the example and pious exhortations of the sayd Religious, forlooke the vanity of this world and became Frere Minors; and such as could not, serued God by prayers, and did penance in their owne houses: and by this meane for corporall benefittes they gaue in exchange spirituall in double mesure.

Of the humilitie and obedience of Br. Giles.

THE V. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father S. Francis cordially loued Br. Giles for his great perfection in all vertues, and his promptitude in doeing well: and therefore did often obserue him, and would say to his other Religious, that he was one of his knightes of the round table, so did he call the humble and deuout Religious. Now Br. Giles one day demaunded obedience of S. Francis to goe where he pleased, or to remaine where he was: the holy Father answered him, your residence is provided, goe where you will: wherupon hauing demaunded and received his benediction, he went and walked in this freedome sower whole dayes, but finding his spirit much disquieted, he returned to S. Francis: Father (sayd he) I beseech you designe me a certaine place whither to goe, becaule goeing according to my owne liberty I cannot haue my conscience free: the S. sent him to the Couent of Fabrian whither he went barefoote with a very ragged habitt, though the season were extreme cold. On the way he mett a passenger that sayd vnto him: I would not goe so poorly cloathed in so cold a season, were I therby to pourchace paradise: by which wordes the deuill so augmented the cold that he expected death therby: but he incontinently called to minde that our lord IESVS CHRIST went barefoote and poorly cloathed through the world, and endured far more cold and other labours for our sakes: these pious cogitations did in this sort warme first his hart, and then all his body with a diuine heat: wherfore he began to praise God his sweet lord, who had thus warmed him not with materiall fier, but by the only burning heat of his diuine loue. So Br. Giles remayned many yeares in the sayd place, where one day weighing his sinnes, he ascended on a mountaine neere by, whither he carreyed a yōg Religious, whome he commanded, with a cord about his necke to lead him naked to the place where the other Religious were: and entring in this sort before them, he began with teares to cry: Haue compasfion and pity of me miserable and detestable sinner: The Religious beholding him in
such

such a gasty plight, began all to weep, and prayed him to putt on his habitt: but he answered, with bitter teares and extreme sighes, that he was unworthy to be a Frere Minor: Yet if you will that I take the habitt againe, said he, I will, as an almofe receaued of you, though I doe not deserue it: and so he cloathed himselfe and there remaind, labouring with his handes in making caskettes of straw to couer or keep glasse, and litle baskettes which he and his companion carryed to the neighbour towne and villages, and in exchaunge receaued what they needed either of food or cloathing; and with the rest he cloathed other Religious, saying that such almofe done to any Religious prayed for him when he slept and could not then pray himselfe.

This good Religious retourning one day from the feldes, hauing in his handes a reed and a hatchett, he past before a church, the Chappe-laine wherof seeing him called him hypocrite: which did so grieue and afflikt Br. Giles that he wept bitterly. A Religious finding him thus lamenting, demandd the occasion of his teares, he answered him: because I am an hypocrite, as a Priest, did now instantly assure me. The Religious replied, poore man doest thou then belieue it to be true? Br. Giles answered that he belieued it because he was a Priest that auouched the same, and he could not conceaue that a Priest would lie. The Religious replied, Brother, be no longer disquieted, for it may be thou art no hypocrite, because the opinion of men is most often farre from the iudgement of God. Br. Giles with this reasonable answer was somewhat satisfied and comforted, saying that if he were not such, it was by the pure grace of God.

Admirable simplicity of Br. Giles.

Hearing one day relation of the fall of Br. Helie, that had bin Generall of the Order, whence he was an Apostata, then liuing excommunicated thence in the traine and seruice of the Emperour Frederic the second, then a rebell vnto the Church, he with extreme grieve fell flat vpon the ground, and there contemptibly touned and tumbled himselfe, affirming that he would descend as low as he could, because the other had wrought his owne destruction by clymeing to high.

This great seruant of God being one day out of the Couent, he receaued a letter and therby commaundement from his Generall to meet him at Alsifium whither he instantly rooke his iorney: his companion putting into his minde that it were good to retourne first to the Couent to aduertise the Religious therof, he answered: Brother, I am commanded to goe to Alsifium and not to the Couent, so much did he yeld himselfe to obedience, that his only cogitation was readily to obey.

The Guardian hauing commanded a Religious that was praying to goe to demaund almofe: the Religious therat murmured exceedingly with himselfe, and in this distemper came to Br. Giles thus cōplayning:

Resolutio Father, I was praying in my cell, and the Guardian hath commanded me
of Bro. to goe begge, so that I must omitt the greater good for the lesse. B. Giles
Giles answered him: brother, you know not yet what prayer is: for the most
rouching true and perfect is, that the subiect doe the wil of his Superiour.
prayer.

How zealous Br. Giles was of his rule, and of holy pouerty.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

THe blessed Br. Giles, as the true disciple of S. Francis was a great friend of pouerty. From his entring into Religion to the end of his life he had neuer but one habitt, and that all patched. He went alwayes barefoot, & made his owne cell with earth and brāches of trees, shunning all such superfluous celles as were more handsome & commodiously built. Comming one time to Assisim to visit the sepulcher of S. Francis, the Religious shewed him the Couent that was new built very great and sumptuous, shewing him the great edifice of the Church, and a faire structure of the altare that had three stages or stories of hight, then the Cloister, the refectory, the dormitory and other places newly built for the commodity of the Religious, who gloried in the accomplishment of so eminent a peece of worck. Br. Giles very attentiuely considered all without vttering a word; and hauing seene all, he addressed himselfe to those that guided him saying: Brethren, here is no want vnto you but of women. The Religious seeming to be much scandalized att those wordes, Br. Giles replied: you should not wonder att what I haue sayd, for you know well that it is no more lawfull for vs to dispense with pouerty then with chastity. So that you hauing bid adieu to pouerty, taking that for lawful which is directly against our rule, I doe much admire you doe not dispense with your selues in the breach of this other article, considering that both are vowes by you equally made vnto God.

Grave & short reprehensions of Br. Giles against the transgression of pouerty.

Bad Religious more punished in hell then World-linges.

There was a Religious that came one day full of ioy and contentmēt to Br. Giles & sayd: Father I bring you good newes. This last night, I saw a vision of hell; and looking very curiously into it, I could not see any of our Religious. Which Br. Giles vnderstanding, he sighing sayd: I belieue thee my child, I belieue that you haue seene none: and oftentimes reiterating the same wordes he was rauished in spirit: then retourniing to himselfe he added: belieue it for certaine, my Child, that there are some; but thou sawest them not because thou diddest not descend low enough; where they are tormēted, wretched as they are, for not hauing performed worckes conformable to their rule and habit: for as holy Religious haue, with the most perfect and glorious, their residence in heauen, so those which are bad haue their place with the most wicked in hell.

How

How much Br. Giles affected the purity of Chastity.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THis venerable Father continually afflicted his flesh, keeping it subiect to the spirit: Which he did to conserue in his soule the splendour of chastity, & therfore he accustomed to eat but once a day, and that litle and very late. He would say that our flesh was like vnto a hogge that very greedily ran to the dirt and filth delighting himselfe therein, or like the beetle that in all his life doth nothing but tumble and wallow himselfe in loathsome filthines. He would also affirme our flesh to be the most valliant soldier that our ennemy hath against vs.: by which wordes and other like, he demonstrated what an ennemy himselfe was to the peruerse inclinations of his senses, and what a friend to Angelicall chastity.

Being one day in the citiy of Spoletum, he heard a voice as of a woman that called him: this voice being of the deuill, suggested into his heart such a temptation, as he had neuer experienced a greater. But as a valerous Champion of IESVS CHRIST, he chased faire away his ennemy and remayned victorious, first by cruell disciplining himselfe, then by seruent prayer.

A Religious Priest being exceedingly afflicted and tormented by the deuill with a cruell temptation of the flesh and getting no remedy by abstinences and prayers, he sayd with himselfe, if I could see Br. Giles to discouer vnto him this mine affliction, I am assured he would relieue me: but he was so faire distant that there was no meane to come att him. Br. Giles (or his Angell for him) appeared one night vnto him, with whose prelence the Religious being exceedingly comforted, he opened vnto him all his temptation, and demaunded of him some ayde and counsaile. Br. Giles sayd vnto him, come hither brother, what would you doe to a dogge that would bite you? The Religious answered that he would cry att him and make him fly. Br. Giles replied, doe the like to him that tempteth you, and I will pray to God to asist and encourage you therin. whervpon the Religious awaking, he found himselfe fully comforted and deliuered of his troublefome temptation. Other Religious were also in such sort molested with the like temptations, that they became euen desperate and in tearmes to leaue the Order: neuertheless they were deliuered by the wordes and prayers of Br. Giles.

A Religious came one time full of ioy and contentment vnto him vpon a victory gotte against a réptation of the flesh: for he had perceaued & heard a woman come behinde him, which caused him a very gienous

temptation, and the neerer she came vnto him, the more did his temptation encrease. But she pasing before him, and he hauing attentiuely beheld her, was freed of the temptation. Br. Giles asked him if she were old or yong: he answered, she was olde and deformed. Br. Giles replied that it was no great meruaile if the temptation presently ceased, and with all added: know brother, that you gott no victory but haue bin vanquished: for the victory consisted in not beholding her at all when she past by you: & this is the securest remedy one can vse in the conflict of the flesh. Therefore herein be very carefull hereafter, for feare that in steed of an olde, you behold a faire young woman, which would cause the temptation, with infamy, to proceed further.

As is a
victory of
chastity
not to be-
hold a
woman.

How Br. Giles went into Africa to preach to the Moors, with intention there to suffer Martyrdom.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THe yeare 1219. wherein the greatest generall chapter was held of the Frere Minors, S. Francis deputing and disposing of all his Religious throughout all Christendome and even among the Infidels, Africa fell to Br. Giles his lott, whither he hastened with many his companions of one same spirit. And to that end they embarqued themselves with an Italian merchant, and safely arrived att Tunes; but the deuill by diuine permission presented him in this sort of his desired successe in this voyage: In the said city of Tunes there was an old More, a man of great authority with those Pagans, whome they reputed a saint; he had for a long time opinatiuely forborne to speake: but as soone as Br. Giles and his companions were landed, this More went presently preaching and exclaiming through all the streetes and corners that certaine Infidels were arrived, who intended to condemne and calumniat their great Prophett and their law: and therefore counsailed and commanded them to seeke them out they being Christiāns & to kil them. This caused a great rumour and tumult ouer all the city, in such sort that in an instant they were all armed and prepared themselves to murder these poore Religious. But the Christians hauing vnderstood the cause of this insurrection, and fearing the Moors would kill them all, they forcibly thrust Br. Giles and his companions againe into the shipp, in which they came. But these true seruantes of IESVS CHRIST did not omitt to preach to the Moors out of the shipp: which putt the Christians into such a feare, that they commanded the Mariners of the vessel to hoysse their sailes: and so, being peruented of the effecting of their pious desires they were returned into Italy.

Of the

Of the hight and sublimity of Br. Giles his contemplation.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

After this holy Father had spent many yeares in the active life, in affliction and labours, it pleased almighty God to make him a new man, calling him to the repose of contemplation, and priuiledging him above all men of his time. The beginning of this his perfection was, when being in the Couent of Faleron neere Perusia offering his prayer one night he was touch'd with the hand of God, and replenished with such a supernaturall consolation, that it seemed to him that God would separate his soule from the body. In this instant he felt his members as dead, it seeming vnto him that his soule forooke them and that being gon forth she already delighted and pleased her selfe in the sight and contemplation of her so great naturall beauty, but much more of her spirituall, wherewith the holy Ghost had already endowed her, whereby she appeared to her selfe more beautifull then all humane consideration could comprehend, as himselfe a litle before his death did testifie. In this extasie we receiued vnto him celestiall secrettes so great, that he would neuer disclose them to any: and therefore he would sometimes say: Happy is he that can conserue the secrettes of God in himselfe: and it must not be objected vnto me that God hath reuealed them vnto me: to the end I should manifest them to others: for when it shall please him that I reueale them, he will discouer them vnto me by other meanes.

Of diuers apparitions of our Lord and S. Francis, to Br. Giles.

THE X. CHAPTER.

THe eighteenth yeare of the conuersion of Br. Giles (when S. Francis dyed) he went to dwell in the Couent of Cretone in Toscare within the Diocese of Chiusi: the first night of his being there, there appeared vnto him in vision an Emperour that spake very familiarly vnto him: this presaged vnto him the diuine vision of the glory which God communicated vnto him in that place, where spending the lent of S. Martin in very austere fastes and continuall prayers, he had one night an apparition of S. Francis: to whome he said that he had a great desire to speake vnto him. The S. answered him: Brother sit and examine wel your selfe before hand: and so vanished. Br. Giles persevering three entyer dayes in prayer IESVS CHRIST appeared vnto him before

the feast of his holy Natiuity: and for as much as might be coniectured by his wordes, he was rauished in spirit and with the eyes of his soule saw the glory of Paradise: he neither could nor durst explicate this vision, which was not continuall, but by intermission till the eue of the Epiphany, at which time he was so replenished with force and consolation both spirituall and supernaturall, that his weake and feeble humane body could not support it: for his soule seemed to expire, so that he was constrained to breath out violent sighes, by reason of the force of his spirit which his body could not sustaine, and albeit he were on the hight of a mountaine in a cell very remote where he prayed, yet did the other Religious sometimes heare him: and then would they led Br. Gratia to assise & helpe him as there should be need. This Religious thus coming one time vnto him & asking him wherfore he cōplained, the holy Father answered: come hither my child, thou art come in good time, for I wished thee here: & then recounted to him many things to his exceeding cōfort. The next morning retourning thither he found him bitterly weeping, wherfore he prayed him not to afflict himselfe in that sort, for it might weel shorten his dayes. Brother Giles answered, Alas my friendly Brother, how may I refraine from teares, that feare to be the enemy of God? for hauing receaued so many graces of his Majesty, I doubt I doe not serue him as I ought, and according to his holy will, wherof if I were certaine, it would be more gracious vnto me then death it selfe: which he spake in respect of the vision and diuine reuelation that made such alteration in him, and therefore he sayd: Till this present I wet whither I would, and with my handes laboured as I would: but henceforward I can no more follow my fantasie, but must doe according to the spirit that I find to conduct me. This feare in this holy Father was like to that of S. Paul when he sayd: we carie this (diuine) treasure in earthen vessels. But because the certaine perill of the losse of an eternall and infinite treasure, would cause a diffidence and despayre in any one by consideration of his naturall infirmity, he added: we know that the preseruacion of the diuine treasure consisteth in the vertue and power of God and not of vs. The layd Religious then tooke occasion to comfort him, or rather the holy Ghost, for and by him with the said sentence of S. Paul, laying, that though it were expedient that the feare of God should be alwayes in vs, yet should it be there with faith and full confidence in his bounty, who, as he giueth grace vnto his seruantes, so also he giueth them force to preserue the same together with perseuerance. Br. Giles being by these wordes comforted, he proceeded in employing his dayes in such hight of contemplation and spirituall consolation, as is not to be exprelled, demanding of almighty God, as a favour, not to be so ouer-charged, alledging that he being so great a sinner,

ner, an idiot, rustike and simple, was not worthy so much grace but the more he reputed himselfe vnworthy, the more did almighty God augment his fauours. There was a religious of pious life in the same Couert, to whome God did some times reueale his secrettes certaine dayes before that Br. Giles had the said vision: this Religious saw in vision the sunne to arise out of the cell of Br. Giles, and there-ouer to remayne till night, and he afterward seeing Br. Giles so admirably chaunged, sayd vnto him B other, support and gouerne tenderly the Sunne of God, and thou shalt be blessed.

Of the graces Which God bestowed on Brother Giles in the said vision.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

IF vnto any it appeare difficult to be beleueed, that Brother Giles saw almighty God, not only in imaginary and intellectuall semblance, but euen in his diuine essence, as this worthy seruant of God confessed, affirming that God had depriued him of faith: lett him read the epistle of saint Augustin vnto Paulinam, *De vidento Deum*, wherein he shall find that speaking of the vision of God in essence, he sayth: It is not a matter incredible, that God permitteth this excellencie of diuine reuelation in his substance to certaine holy personnes before their death, to the end their bodyes be buried, he vseth these wordes, before they be dead for their sepulture, because as they who manifestly see God enioyning his glory, are entirely and totally separated from their mortall bodyes, in the same proportion it is necessary for those that are to receaue such a reuelation, to be separated from their bodyes according to the cognitive and sensitiue puissance, att least to their actions: for this is in a certaine fashion to be out of the termes of this life. Wherevpon saint Paul said: Were it that my soule were in my body, or separated from it I know not, God knoweth it, it was transported, rauished and eleuated euen to the third heauen. Brother Giles, speaking of the said vision which he had, affirmed that he was thereby so assured in the knowledge of almighty God and of his glory, that he had lost the faith which he formerly had of him. He also affirmed that he was directly of opinion, that his soule entirely abstracted from the body saw almighty God. After his death he reuealed vnto a Religious, that also in the same vision he had bin replenished with the giftes of the holy Ghost and confirmed in graces: and doubtlesly the merueillous effectes that remayned in

2. Cor. 11.

*Admirable
disposition
to
extasie
in Bro.
Giles.*

in the soule of Brother Giles confirme this verity : for after this vision he was so often rapt in extasie, that there is hardly found any other saint before or after him to haue exceeded him therein. It appeared by his exterior actions what esteeme he made therof: for he seldome or neuer went out of his cell, but employed himselfe in fastinges & prayers, shunning all idle wordes, and all fruitlesse conuersation: and if such discourtes were forcibly vsed in his presence, and that any would needes make him some relation to the preiudice of any other, he would heare nothing therof, affirming that each one ought to be very wary and respectiue not to offend God, his neighbour and his owne soule by such discourses. And on the contrary when he heard speake of God, he was presently rapt into extasie, and remayned insensible & as dead, so that the fame of this sublime and singular grace being diuulged and made knowne to all personnes, euen to the contry people and to children, when they mett him they would say, Paradise Brother Giles, and at the instant and very place where he heard that sweet and gracious word he would fall into extasie: in such sort as if the Religious desired to talke with him of God and to receaue his counsailes and doctrines, they must be wary not to speake of the glory of the diuine vision, least that being rauished in spiritt they were frustrated of their desire. And because he liued sequestred from the other Religious, Brother Bernard therefore as zealous of his neighbours good reprehended him therein, calling him but halfe a man, as regarding only his owne good. But Brother Giles answered, that it was more secure to content himselfe with a litle then by attempting too much, to endanger the losse of all: considering that vpon a very small occasion a great grace is often lost: so that one must be wary at such time not to loose that in laughing, which is not purchaced but with much labour and weeping.

Being one day in spirituall conference with Brother Andrew and Brother Grätian two Religious of pious life and his spirituall children, he told them that he was borne foure times, first, out of his mothers wombe; secondly when he was baptised; thirdly when he entred into Religion, and fourthly the day that IESVS CHRIST appeared vnto him, and manifested vnto him his glory. Wherto Brother Andrew answered that it was true, but if he should be in a forraigne contry, where it should be demanded of him if he knew Brother Giles, he might anough that he knew thus much of him, that it was twenty foure yeares since he was borne, and that he had faith before he was borne, but had lost it afterwarde: Brother Giles replied that all this was true: because, sayd he, before, I had not such faith as I ought to haue: the which also God did take from me and gaue me a more cleare and perfect knowledge of him and of his glory, and among many graces which I haue receaued

ceaued of his diuine Maieſty, this is one, that I haue knowne and doe know my ſelfe to deſerue to haue a cord faſtened about my neck, and to be in extreme diſgrace trayned through all the ſtreetes and publike places of the world, ſo to receaue all the ſcornes and deriſions that can be offered to the lewdelt man in the world. Whervpon Brother Andrew made him this demaund: Tell me Brother, if you haue not faith, what would you doe if you were Prieſt, and were ſolemnely to ſing *Credo in vnum Deum*? It ſeemeth you ſhould neceſſarily ſay: *Cognoſco vnum Deum patrem omnipotentem*: and incontinently he was rapt in extaſie: all this he ſaid, not that he had ſimply no faith: but by reaſon of a greater light and illumination which God with apparant euidence had giuen him.

How Brother Giles was rapt in extaſie before Pope Gregory the ninth.

Pope Gregory the ninth being with his court remoued to Perusia, and vnderſtanding that Brother Giles, of whome he had heard merueillous thinges, was neere thervnto, he ſent for him as deſirous to know him. Brother Giles came preſently to Perusia. But being entred into the Pallace of the Pope he felt himſelfe interiously moued with the ſpiritual ſweetneſſe which ordinarlye arriued him before his extaſie: wherefore conſidering that it was not conuenient he ſhould in that eſtate preſent himſelfe before his holineſſe, he ſent his companion to make his excuſe. But the Pope not admitting it, would know why being within his Pallace he would not preſently come to him: ſo that his companion was enforced to ſay vnto him: Moſt holy Father, Brother Giles hath deferred to ſalute your holineſſe for no other cauſe, but that by ſignes ordinary vnto him, he foreſeeth that comming in your preſence he ſhall fall into extaſie. The Pope hereto replied: I come to Perusia more for this only reſpect then for any other thing: and therefore bring him incontinently hither which was done, but as ſoone as Brother Giles had in great humility kiſſed the feet of the Pope, he ſcarcely began to ſpeake vnto him, but that he was rauiſhed in ſpirit and remayned immoueable with his eyes fixed towardes heauen: which the Pope ſeeing, he ſayd: verily if thou die before me, I would ſeek the knowledge of no other miracles to canonize thee. An other time the ſaid Pope going to the Couent of the Frere Minors of Perusia to viſit Brother Giles, the Religious ran preſently to his cell to aduertise him therof, but they found him in extaſie, which the Pope vnderſtanding, he went to his cell, accompanied with many Cardinals and other noble men, who all continued a long time beholding him, and to ſee if he would retourne to himſelfe. But ſeeing it, would not be in ſhort time, the Pope with his

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company departed much admiring and troubled that he could not speake with him as he desired. He commanded that his extasie being ended, he should be told his holinesse attended him to dine with him, which was done, and at dinner time this good Father went to the Pope, whose feet he most reuerently kissed, and was with al curtesie entertayned. There was then with his holinesse a gentleman that sayd vnto him, that he had heard report of Br. Giles his gracious and sweet singing, praying his holinesse to cause him to sing, therof to receaue some contentment and consolation. The Pope as well in regard of his deuotion towards him, as of his desire to heare him prayse God, said vnto him: Sonne, I should be glad you would comfort and reioyce vs in God, by some gracious and deuout song. Br. Giles answered, doth it please your holinesse that I sing? which hauing diuers times reiterated, he retyred himselfe into a corner, and was presently rapt in extasie. The Pope & those with him, desirous to experience the force of that extasie, they felt & found him without pulse or heat. The Pope being exceedingly troubled that he had lost the company and conuersation of this holy Religious, sharply reprehended the gentlemā that had perswaded him to cause him to sing. The time of supper being come, and Br. Giles still in extasie, the Pope said to the Cardinals present: I am sory this holy Father is not heere with vs: but I am resoluēd to try in him the vertue of obediēce, whereof haue bin seene many experiēces in the Frere Minors: then cōming to Br. Giles he said vnto him: Because the Order of the Frere Minors depēdeth immediatly of vs, we cōmand thee vpon obediēce to retourne incōtinently to thy selfe. The successe was admirable, for att the very instāt this mā of God that had bin entierly insēible & as dead, stood vp right on his feet, and wēt & fell on his knees before his holines, with deep humility acknowledging his fault. The Pope causing him to arise, took him by the hād & spake vnto him: then Br. Giles, demāded of him how he did; the Pope answered that thāckes be to God he was well. Br. Giles added: Holy Father, you haue great need of the help of God in the great & importāt affaires which you haue. For I suppose that the inquietude & occupatiōs of the soule in exterior matters, are of great labour. The Pope answered: My child thou sayest true: therefore doe I pray thee to treat with almighty God for me, that by meane of his grace I may the more easly carry the weight of this burdē. Br. Giles replied that he would willingly doe it, and submitted his neck to the yoke of the cōmandement of God: & to that end instātly retired himselfe from the presēce of the Pope, to performe his obediēce, and employed himselfe in prayer, where he was lo rauished in spirit, that he returned not thēce in fower houres after. In the meane while the Pope & all his cōpany praysed God in his seruāt, to whome he had imparted such a diuine familiarity that he cōuersed more out of, then in the world, though

he were as yet in this mortall flesh. Now Br. Giles being returned to himselfe, his holinesse sat downe att table & willed he should eat with him: which was an incredible contentment to the Pope, who afterward commended him to a chāber to repose. The day following his holinesse familiarly discoursing with him asked him what should become of him. The holy Father making his excuse of answearing therunto: the Pope againe vrged him att least to tell him what he should be. Wherto Br. Giles hauing likewise replied that he could not answere therin; being still pressed by his holinesse cōmandement he sayd: holy Father, endeavour to keepe both the eyes of your spiritt alwayes very pure: the right eye cōtinually to contēplate high & fature thinges, wherein we ought to addresse all our actiōs, & the left to order & direct presēt matters that are vnder our charge, & doe appertayne to the duety of our place and quality. He spake many other thinges of notable edificatiō which are not extāt, wherby appeared the great abōdānce of diuine lighte imparted to this holy Religious. The Pope therewith remayned more edified then euer, and was enamoured of this sainct, as being the true and perfect freind of God.

Of the exercises, and of the affection Br. Giles had to the contemplatiue life.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

THIS true seruāt of God had his face alwayes cherfull & ioyful, and whē he spake to & answered any one, he alwayes discouered himselfe to be full of ioy & deuotion, and entierly eleuated in God, yea sometimes he so exceeded in this ioy, that he oftē would kisse the very stones, & did such other like actes, therunto cōstrayned by the loue of his Creatour: and perseuering in such grace he was very wary not to contristate the spirit of God which he possessed, so that it was exceeding troublesome vnto him vpon whatloeuer occasion, to leaue the diuine cōuersation and retourne to the cōsideration of these humane affaires. He desired to entertaine his life with leaues of trees only, to haue more occasiō to shunne all humane cōsolation. Whē cōming frō prayer he mett with the other Religious, shewing himselfe to be full of ioy, he would say in a māner as did S. Paul: The eye hath not seene, nor eare hath heard, neither hath it ascēded into the hart of mā, what thinges God hath prepared for them that loue him. By which wordes he confirmed and enflamed the spirit of the other Religious in the loue of God.

He held in exceeding reuerence and deuotion the sacramentes of the church & the diuine seruice. And if any discoursed vnto him of the cōstitutions & decrees of the Church, he in this sort with great seruour prayed thē: O holy mother & Romane Church! Ignorant and miserable as we are, we doe not know thee, nor much lesse the zeale & bōuty wherby

*1. Cor. 2.
Br. Giles
deuout to
the cō-
stitutions
of the
Church
and to
the Sa-
ments.*

thou labourest to saue vs . Thou art she that teachest vs the way of our saluation, and directest vs in the right and secure path, wherein he that walketh cannot stray, but he that seeketh and followeth another, shall only find therein an eternall damnation . He was present att masse with exceeding seruour . All sondayes and solemne feastes he receaued his Creatour, and employed those dayes entierly in contemplation of the grace receaued: for goeing very early into the church, he would there remayne all the day in the company rather of Angels and Saints the of men. Celebrating the feast of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, and many other times in the seruour of his prayer, he hath bin seene rapt in extasie and eleuated above the ground, the hight of three handfuls or a foot and a halfe.

Of other such extasies of spirit recorded of the glorious Saint.

F Iue Prouincials did at one time with great deuotion and reuerence visit this blessed Father with Br. Gratian his companion, who aduertited him of their arriual, vpon knowledge wherof, he presently mett them, and hauing graciously entertayned them, he with great seruour of spirit began to speake vnto them, and beholding the heaven, with his armes opened as to play on a viole, he sung in this manner: O Br. make a castell, hauing in it neither stone nor iron! O my Br. build me a citty without lime or stone! and thus singing he was rapt in extasie. The said Prouincials knew not the signification of the wordes: But Br. Gratian told them that by the castels and citties, he meant the holy Apostles and martyrs of the Primitiue church, who without the armour of iron and without the helpe of any temporall matter generously builded the house of God in soules: which zeale and intention had Br. Giles renouncing temporalities, to become a castell of the liuing God and a glorious citty, not of temporall building or substance, but spirituall, of poerty and diuine loue. And because they as Prouincials of the Religion were captaines and furtherers of this worck, he by this song gaue them a notable document of their duety in their vocation and office.

This holy Father being in the monastery of Agele by Perusia, he after supper made an exhortation to the Religious in the refectory, with his ordinary seruour, and with such sweetnes that he enflamed the hartes of all his audience in diuine loue, yea his owne also, in such sort that he was rauished and out of himselfe in the middest of his Brethré, where he so continued till the cock-crowing, and in the meane time he shined with such a splendour which enuironed him, that the brightnes of the moone which then was in full, was so obscured that the shining thereof being darcned by this new light, she appeared not in that place, which

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put the Religious in admiration, who gaue thanks to our lord for the admirable workes demonstrated in his seruant.

Brother Giles one day thus reasoned with S. Bonauenture who was Generall of the Order: Father, God hath bestowed many fauours on you that are learned, for you haue knowledge of many matters by which you prayle him. But what shall we doe to saue our selues, we, I say, that are ignorant and idiots? S. Bonauenture answered: if God had giuen no other grace to men, but only ability to loue him, it would suffice: because loue is more gratefull to God, then any other thing that can be offered vnto him. Brother Giles herevpon replied: Tell me, Father, if you please, can an ignorant person loue God as much as one learned? he can, said S. Bonauenture: yea I say more, a simple and poore old fellow may loue our lord as much as a Doctour in diuinity. Vpon these wordes Br. Giles went with great seruour into the garden, and turning towards the towne, he cryed out: Poore and caitiue old wretch, ignorant idiot and simple, loue thy Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, and thou mayest be greater then Br. Bonauenture. Which sayd, he remayned three houres rapt in extasie.

Of an admirable dispute held by Br. Giles touching free Will, against Br. Gerardin, in the presence of many Religious.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THe venerable Br. Giles being in the Couent of Perugia, a Roman gentlewoman called Seauē-Sunnes, that was very deuout to S. Francis both in his life time and after his death: for she made her residence att Alsifium to beneere vnto his sepulcher, came to visit him to receaue some consolation of his energicall doctrine: there did she find Brother Gerardin, a Religious of exemplar life and very learned, together with some other very spirituall Religious, who also came to visit Brother Giles, to heare of him some spirituall exhortation. Thus discoursing together, they fell into dispute vpon a certaine passage of holy scripture. And among many other sentences alleaded by Br. Giles for prooffe of what he maintained, this was one: He that doeth not what he can, often endureth that which he would not. Br. Gerardin desirous to entertaine Br. Giles in discourse, to gratifie the cōpany and for his particular cōtēntment, thus begā scolasticallly to argue against him: Br. I much admire that you affirme that a man endureth what he would not, if he doe not what he can, considering that a man can doe nothing of himselfe: which is proued by many reasons, wherefore I say, that the power presuppoeth the being, so that the action of the thing be

Gal. 6. according to its being. And so much doe the wordes of the Apostle signifye, where he sayth: If any man esteeme himselfe to be something, where as he is nothing, he seduceth himselfe: whence ensueth that a man cannot doe any thing, sith he is nothing: which I will proue vnto you also by an other reason: If a man of himselfe doe any thing, it is either by his soule, or by his body, or by both together; Now I will proue that he can doe nothing by meane of any of the. First, he can doe nothing by meane of the soule alone, for it is most cleare that the soule separated from the body can neither meritt nor demeritt: neither can he doe more by meane of the body only, because the body receaueth all his operation of his forme, and without the soule it hath no humane being, so that much lesse can it worcke, which is a thinge proper to the forme, and finally, yet lesse can he doe by meane of the composition, that is, of the body and soule vnited together: and if he could doe any thing, it should be by meane of the soule: But I haue proued that the soule being separated from the body can doe nothing, and now I affirme that it can much lesse vnited with her body, because the body being corruptible chardgeth and burdeneth it: as for example, if a beast cannot goe vnloaden, much lesse can it vnder a burthen. Thus Br. Gerardin made his argument appeare very probable which procured to the audience an amazement and confusion. But Br. Giles very prudently answered: My good Br. and friend, beleuee, I pray you, that you haue spooken amisse: wherefore acknowledge therein your fault. Br. Gerardin hauing a litle smiled, acknowledged his fault: then Br. Giles againe: This fault is not of force. When the penance is not admittable and in due forme, no grace can be obayned therby. But tell me, canst thou sing? Br. Gerardin answered he could: sing then with me, sayd Br. Giles, and drew out of his steue a litle instrument made of willow, like those litle gitternes or fidels wheron children play, wherof touching the stringes, he began to proue and demonstrate the proposition of Br. Gerardin to be notoriously inuallible & false, thus affirming on the first: Br. I speake not of the being of man before the creation. I know then he was nothing, and therefore could doe nothing: but I speake of his being since the creation wherin man receiued of God a freewil, wherby he might merit or demeritt, meritt consenting to good, and demeritt yelding to euill: so that you haue very erroneously spooken: And I thinck you intended to circumuent me, for S. Paul in the place by you alleaded, speaketh not of the nullity of the substance nor of the puissance, but of the nullitye of meritt, conformably to what he sayth in an other place: If I haue not charity I am nothing. Neither did I intend to speake of the soule in separation, or of the body dead, but of man liuing, who consenting to grace, hath power if he list, to doe well, and being rebellious, to doe

*Scolasti-
call dis-
tinction
of Bro.
Giles.
1. Cor. 13.*

to doe euill, which is no other thing then not to doe well. Where as you say, the corruptible body burdeneth the soule, the holy scripture doth not yet say that the same taketh away freewill from the soule, leaving her no power to doe good and euill: but the signification is, that it is an impediment to the vnderstanding, and that the affection and imagination of the soule is imployed and entangled in terrestriall affaires, therefore is it sayd a litle before: The terrestriall habitation depresseth the senses distracted in many cogitations and in diuers scattered affaires, which permitt not the soule freely to search the thinges of heauen, where our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST sitteth att the right hand of the Father almighty: because the sight is a subtilty of the purities of the soule, which are made dull and obscure by the diuers inclinations and occupations of the inferiour and corporall powers. Thus did Br. Giles by order refute all the reasons of Br. Gerardin, who much admiring the same, againe with affection and great deuotion acknowledged his fault. Brother Giles then sayd: this is the acknowledgement of the fault, Brother, that auaieth and striketh the stroke. But will you that I yet more manifestly demonstrate that a creature can doe somewhat? Brother Gerardin answered, Father I hefeech you: Brother Giles then getting vp on a graue, cryed out: O thou damned that art tormented in hell! Then himselfe in the personne of the damned with a lamentable, horrible and terrible voice that made those present to tremble, answered: Oh that I am miserable! that I am wretched and accursed! then assuming his ordinary voice he proceeded: Tell me carter, wherefore art thou damned? And taking againe that lamentable voice he answered himselfe. Because I haue not done the good I could, nor shunned and auoyded the euill as I might haue done. He asked him againe in his naturall voice: Thou damned wretch, what wouldest thou doe, or what wouldest thou giue, if it were permitted thee to doe penance? He answered in the gastly voice: if al the world weremine, I would giue it and would content my selfe to dwell in a fire for many wordes, provided that it were such as by litle and litle I could endure, only to auoyd eternall death: for so my paynes should one day att least haue end, but my damnation is eternall. Which said, he returned towardes Brother Gerardin, and sayd: Well, haue you heard, Br. haue you heard, how a creature hath power to good or euill? And after many other spirituall discourses, Brother Giles said to Br. Gerardin: Brother that you may not esteeme this to be a fiction, tell me, if a drop of water fall into the sea; doth it then giue a name to the sea, or the sea to it? He answered, that the substance of the drop of water being swallowed vp, it tooke denomination of the sea, and not the sea of it.

Brother

Sap. 9.

Br. Giles replied: You haue reason; and for prooffe therof he was in the very instant rapt into extasie, so that he demonstrated by effect, that his soule casting it selfe into the profound ocean of the diuine loue and glory, being entierly swallowed vp in God, changed her essence of giace, into that of glory.

How the blessed Br. Giles had the spirit of Prophecie.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

A Dominican Frere being Doctor of diuinity was assaulted with a grievous temptation, for the deuil would put him in doubt of the most pure virginity of the virgin Mother of God; wherein whatsoeuer remedy he applyed, nothing did auayle him: and perceauing that his learning nor vertuous exercises would nothing profit him, he much desired to be assisted by some spirituall personne that could deliuer him of this grievous affliction. Wherefore hauing heard the fame of the vertue of Br. Giles, and that he was a Religious illuminated of God, he repayed vnto him, and att the same time the holy Ghost reuealed vnto Br. Giles the comming of this diuine and the occasion therof, wherefore he went out of his cell and mett him. And entertayning him courteously, before the Religious began to speake, he sayd vnto him: Br. Preacher, she was a virgin before her child birth, then with a litle stick which he had in his hand he stroake the ground, and presently there did spring vp a faire lilly, then he sayd: Br. Preacher, a virgin in her childbirth, and likewise striking the earth with his sticke, there sprung vp an other lilly: and thirdly he layd, Br. Preacher, a virgin after her childbirth: and hauing touched the earth as before, the third lilly appeared. Then hauing made these three admirable demonstrations, and the sayd Religious being entierly freed of the temptations, the lillyes vanished. The holy Father with all speed retired into the Monastery, leauing the Religious full of astonishment and admiration, who gaue thanckes to God for his miraculous deliury, from so troublesome a temptation of the deuill.

Certaine Frere Minors determining to make a well on a mountaine neere to Perusia where Br. Giles was resident, and not according together touching the place, they repayed to him for his aduice, and presently tooke a staffe, & went to the place that God had inspired him, where striking the ground with his staffe, there sprung vp a most delightfull violet, and then he willed the Religious to dig there: which vpon sight of that miracle they did, and there found abundance of water wholsome and pleasant to drinck, and so they finished their well to relieue their necessity.

How

How Br. Giles was visited by S. Lewes king of France, and what passed betwene them.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

S. Lewes the ninth of that name, and fortie fourth king of France, goeing in Pilgrimage to Rome there to visit the holy Apostles, determined to see Br. Giles, of whose sanctity he had heard notable report: being therefore att Perugia, he went to the monastery of the Frere Minors with some few of his neereft fauourites, all vested in pilgrimes weedes, where arriuing, he told the Porter that he desired a word or two with Br. Giles: the Porter deliuered his message that certaine Pilgrimes were att the gate, of whome one desired to speake with him. Br. Giles vnderstanding by reuelation who it was that demaunded for him, he full of seruour of spiritt went incontinently out of his cell: and coming to the gate, the king and he fell both on their knees, and very louingly embraced each other, with entertainment of most deuout and pious mutuall kisses in the face, as if their had bin a very inward and ancient amity betweene them. After they had thus some time remained, and had shewen many mutuall tokens of charity, they separated themselues in silence without the vtterance of one word betweene them. Now whiles these two SS. were vnited in so spirituall a contentment, the Porter demaunded of one of the kinges followers, who that Pilgrime was that with such great familiarity embraced Br. Giles: who answered him that it was Lewes king of France, who goeing to visit the holy Reliques of Rome, tooke in his way the visitation of Br. Giles. The Religious vnderstanding who he was, were exceedingly troubled, because they had seene Br. Giles not only, not to haue giuen him the reuerence due to so great a king, but euen, not to haue vttered so much as one word; and therefore they went expresly to the holy Father, whome they sharply checked and reprehended for this great error, that should in no sort haue bin committed against so puissant a Prince, being also a Christian endwed with so religious a deuotion and mansuetude, as that he came expresly to receaue of him some consolation. Hereunto Br. Giles answered: Trouble not your selues deere Brothers, nor doe you admire, if you see me not speake to the king nor he to me; For when we embraced each other, the diuine light manifested vnto vs the interior of our hartes, reuealing the secrets of his to me, and of mine to him: and hauing fixed the eyes of our soules in the resplendant mirour of the eternall light, wherein euery thing is seene more perfectly then in it selfe, we discoursed together as much as we desired, with an

extreme consolatiō of spirit, without any noyse of wordes, which would rather haue hindered then furthered vs, in regard of the sweetnes that our soules did feelee. With this answere the Religious being stricken into exceeding admiration and confusion, they acknowledged their faultes among themselues, repenting to haue iudged so admirable a worcke of God which they did not vnderstand.

How Br. Giles comforted and encouraged a Religious whome he had conuerted and brought to be of the Order, who complained that he shewed not himselfe so gracious vnto him as before he received the habit.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

A Knight much deuoted and friendly to Br. Giles, by his pious admonitions became a Frere Minor, but after he had taken the habit, Br. Giles seemed to haue no more care of him, for he no more visited nor instructed him as before, which was a great affliction to this Religious: wherfore he one day complained therof vnto him in these termes: Father, I am extremely troubled, discontented and doe admire at you, that whiles I was in the world, you tooke such paine to instruct me in what was necessary to my saluation, so that by your holy admonitions I am come to be Religious, and principally vpon hope the more commodiously to enioy your holy conuersation, wherein I experience the contrary, and find my selfe much deceiued. For you giue me not now so much as one word, so that you neither counsaile nor instruct me any more, nor giue me any manner of consolation; so that you seeme to haue vtterly forsaken me: belieue you therefore I beseech you that my soule can receiue no greater contentment, then to vnderstand by you the manner how to gouerne her selfe in this new kind of life. Whereto Br. Giles answered, Brother, sith you are of the house and family of God, as my selfe also am, and that you and I as fellowes doe fight vnder one capitaine and lord, it is not conuenient for me that am your companion, to command you to doe this, and not to doe that; because I know not whither the wil of God be that you doe a thing contrary to that which I may counsaile you, and so I may persuaade you to one thing, and God to an other. Thus speaking he lifted vp his face towards heauen and speaking with his Redeemer in presence of this Religious, with a very sweet voice, and yet with seruour, he said: O my Lord IESVS CHRIST! how worthy and excellent a thing is sanctity and chastity? how pleasing to thy diuine Maiesy? how well louest thou the soule that possesseth it? how doest thou heare her in
the

the company of Angels? and in what manner doest thou recompense her with eternall life? then sighing with gesture that discouered exceeding contentment, he sayd: Ah! ah! ah my God! how pleasing and gratefull is such a soule vnto thee? and beginning againe, he continued: O my God, how pleasing is that creature vnto thee, who for thy loue sequestreth his hart from the world, forsaking Father, mother, kinred, friendes and whatsoeuer he affected in the world? then discouering an extreme ioy, he sighed as before, saying: Ah! ah! ah my God! how gratefull vnto thee are the obedient soules, that haue no other will then thine? O my God! how doth thy diuine maiesty loue him, that with all his hart obeyeth thy holy commandementes? and after these wordes, he sighed as before, and then sayd: O my God! how pleasing is that soule vnto thee, which being eleuated in thy loue perseuereth in continuall prayers, contemplating thy celestiaall treasures and graces: But how much is that soule comforted of thee when in her deuotions she poureth out abondance of teares very gratefull to thy diuine maiesty, and profitable to her selfe, because they bathe the conscience, and open paradise vnto her? Ah! ah! ah my God! how pleasing is that soule, and how gratefull is that personne vnto thee, that for thy loue supporteth fatigations, labours and affrontes, and carryeth on him thy crosse, not refusing the burden therof, as our brother the asse, which complayneth not for being ouerloaden and beaten, nor when one sayth, I would the wolfe had eaten thee, or that thou were fleyed: yea to such iniuries an affrontes he answereth not a worde, to giue me a great example of patience. Now with this new kind of speech, this new Religious was exceedingly comforted, yea and extremely encouraged to perseuerance in the seruice of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. And this may serue for a generall document to make appeare what feare and discretion is to be vsed by him that is to teach those soules, whose perfect Master is IESVS CHRIST alone, who guideth them according to their capacity and the grace which he hath giuen them for their saluation, knowing that the instruction ought to be more of the spirit and of God, then of any humane tongue, to touch and enflame their hartes in the poursuite of vertue.

How Brother Giles defended himselfe from the deuill, by whome he was often persecuted.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

The vertue of the signe of the crosse and of holy water.

THe wicked spiritues were the more hatefull and enuious to this seruant of God, because he had knowledge and vnderstanding of many sublime and diuine secrettes: for which respect they often tormented him, as within few dayes after he had that diuine vision, being alone praying in his cell, the deuill appeared vnto him in so horrible and fearfull a figure, that it presently depriued him of his speech. But hauing in his hart called for helpe vnto almighty God, he was incontinently deliuered: and afterwarde made very fearfull relations of the lothsomnes of the deuill. Br. Giles being once entred about midnight into the Church of S. Appollinaris, in Spoleta, there to offer his prayers, the deuill lept vpon his shoulders whiles he prayed, and held him so crushed and oppressed for a time that he could scarce moue, yet he so strugled that he gott to the holy water pott, where hauing taken holy water and signed himselfe with the crosse, the deuill presently fled.

An other time as he was praying, the deuill so tormented him, that he was enforced as much as he could to cry out: help me my Brethren; att which call his companion Br. Gratian came running, and he was instantly deliuered. Praying also an other night, he heard the ennemy with many other deuils that were very neere him, who talking among themselues as men might doe, sayd: Wherefore doth this Religious labour so much, sith he is already a saint, so agreeable is he to God, and euen in continuall extasie. Which they sayd, to tempt him and induce him to vaine glory. The last yeare of his life, the deuill persecuted him more cruelly the he had don before; as he thought one night after prayer to repose himselfe, the deuill carryed him into so straight a place, that he could not turne him on any side, whatsoeuer endeaour he made to arise. Br. Gratian hearing him complaine, came to the dore of his cell to know if he were in prayer, or that some other accident were befallen him, and he perceiued that he was exceedingly troubled, wherefore he began to cry out: Father, what is the mater? wherto this holy Father answered: Come quickly my child, come quickly. But Br. Gratian being vnable to open the dore of the cell, sayd vnto him: I know not the reason, but I cannot open the dore. Br. Giles prayed him to doe his utmost to open it speedely: which, after much labour he did, then coming neere vnto him with all his power to assist him, he could not so much

much as moue him out of the place where the deuill had throwne him. which Br. Giles perceauing, he said: Br. let me alone in this case, and lett vs referre all into the handes of God. So Brother Gratian, (though against his will) for bearing to endeauour to deliuer the holy Father out of this place, he fell to prayer for him, where by, a litle eased, he sayd to his companion: you haue done well in comming to asist me; God reward you for it. But Brother Gratian complayning that he had not called him in this imminent peill of death wherein he was, and relating the disgrace it would haue bin to him, and to his companions if he had so dyed, he sayd vnto him: Be not troubled my child if God by me be reuenged of his enemies: for you must know that how much the deuill resisteth God, seeking to afflict and torment me, so much more is he tormented and descendeth deeper to the profundity of hell, and so when he persecuteth me I am reuenged of him: for the seruice which I haue now done to almighty God, had no beginning of me but of his diuine Maiesty, as the end shall be, if it please him. Wherefore I am assured that the deuill neither can, nor euer shalbe able to preuaile against God: yet did not the deuill omit to torment him, in such sort that going att night to rest in his cell, he alwayes went sighing as if he would say, I expect, yea I goe to martyrdome.

Of diuers answers given by Brother Giles vpon sundry occasions.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

Brother James of Massa a very spirituall Religious, euen in regard of his particuler grace to be often raiused in God, one day demaunded of Brother Giles how he should gouerne himselfe in that grace: and the holy Father answered: Brother, neither augment nor diminish, and shunne the multitude the most you can. Brother James not well vnderstanding him, asked him what he meant by those wordes, and Brother Giles replied: when the spirit is prepared to be conducted into the glorious light of the diuinity, it should neither augment by presumption, nor diminish by negligence; he should also with all possibility loue and seeke solitarines, if he desire that the grace receiued, be well preserved and augmented.

A Religious hauing asked him what he might doe that might be most pleasing to God: he answered singing: One to one, one to one: the sayd Religious alleading that he vnderstood him not, the holy Father replied: you ought without any intermissiō or what soeuer

pretēce, giue one sole soule to one sole God, if you will please him.

Br. Gratian that had bin twenty yeares his companion and discipule, testified that in all that time he neuer heard him vtter one only idle word. This Religious as the discipline of so good a master had exceeding ly profited by his company in spirituall & edificatiue mortification, and had receaued many other graces of God, wherein desiring not to faile, he one time demaunded of his master, in what worck and in what kind of the graces which God had grāted him he should most exercise himselfe: & this questiō he made because he was absolutely resolued precisely to follow his counsaile. Whereto the holy Father answered: you cānot be more gratefull to God in any other action, then in hanging your selfe. Which the good Religious hearing, he was stricken into a greiuous amazement, and with such an answeare much troubled: wherfore Br. Giles proceeding, said: Know my child, that a mā which hangeth himselfe, is neither in heauē nor on earth, but is only lifted frō the earth, & looketh alwayes downe. Now doe you the like, sith if you cānot be now in heauē you may neuerthelesse so raise your selfe aboue earthly thinges (being exercised in vertuous works and prayer) that humility alwayes appeare in you, and liuing so, hope in the diuine mercy. By this counsaile he commended vnto him two singuler vertues, prayer and humility, as speciall graces of a Religious that desireth to please God.

LUC. 14.

A certaine man talking one day with Br. Giles, sayd vnto him: Father I am resolued to become Religious: wherto he answered: if you be fully resolued so to doe, goe first and kill both your parentes: which the other hearing he weeping replyed: Father I beseech you oblige me not to committ such euill and so grieuous sinnes. The holy Father then said; what my friend are you so simple and so ignorant as not to vnderstand me; I meant not that you should kille your parentes with the materiall, but with the métall sword, because according to the word of our Lord, he cannot be his discipule, that hateth not his father, his mother, his kindred and his Friendes.

Two Cardinals one time visiting Br. Giles, to cōferre with him of spirituall affaires, retryring att length frō the place of cōference, they seruently besought him to remēber in his deuotions to recomēd thē to God. Whervpon he answered thē, my lordes what need can you haue of my prayers, sith you haue a greater faith and hope then I? The Cardinals admiring this answeare, asked him what he mēt therby, he answered: Because you with so much richesse, hōnours, delightes & tēporall contentmētes hope to be saued: & I with such and so cōtinuall labours feare to be damned. Which so touched those Cardinals to the quick, that they departed frō him very cōrrite in their soules, & their faces bathed in teares.

A very spirituall Religious was troubled with a greiuous temptatiō,
and

and very humbly and deuoutly prayed God to be deliuered therof: yet could he not be heard. Wherefore he repayred to Br. Giles, who vnderstanding his affliction said vnto him: Brother doe not admire if God, of whome you haue receaued so many graces, will that you continually fight against this your enemy. For when a kinge armeth his knightes, with better and surer armure, it is a signe that he desireth they should fight the more couragiously for him.

A Religious one day demaunding of Br. Giles how he could goe with a good will to prayer, because he ordinarily wēt without deuotion and very coldly: he thus answered him: lett vs suppose that a king hath two faithfull seruantes, wherof the one is well armed, the other vnarmed. He will that they both goe to warre against his ennemies; he that is well armed goeth with great security, as being well accomodated and furnished of what is necessary for the battell: but the other sayth to the king, Syr, you see I am disarmed: neuertheles for the affection I haue to performe your seruice, I will not omitt in this estate to vndergoe this chardge with others. The king considering & taking notice of the loue and fidelity of this his seruant, he caused presently to be brought him such armour as he wanted and was needfull vnto him. So he that wanteth deuotion, and yet assisted with a strong faith, goeth boldly to the warre of prayer, lett him be assured that our Lord will not faile to furnish him, of what he seeth necessary for him to obtaine the victory.

*Counsel
and con-
solation
for those
that pray
which a-
ridity of
spirit.*

A man asking his opinion touching entring into Religion: The holy Father thus answered: Tell me if a poore begger knew a great treasure to be hidden in a field, would he aske Counsaile to goe seeke? whereto the other answering, truly no: Br. Giles replied: how much rather then ought a man runne to seeke and purchase the infinite treasure of the kingdome of God? so this man with this counsaile departed, and hauing giuen all that he had to the poore for the loue of God, he presently became a Friere Minor.

Of other like answeres of the blessed Br. Giles.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

A Certaine good spirituall personne said one day to venerable Brother Giles. Father, I find my selfe exceedingly incombred, & I know not what counsel to take: for if I doe any good act, I am presently tickled with vaine glory; and if I commit any sinne, I am so troubled that I am ready sometimes to fall into dispaire: The holy Father answered: thou doest well to lament thy sinne, and to haue feeling

*One must
not omit
to doe
good for
fear of
vaine
glory.*

feeling of the perill wherto it leadeth : but it should trouble thee with discretion, considering that the power of God is much greater to re- ceauē thee to mercy, then thine is to cause thee to offend God . But the feare of vaine glory should neuer hinder thee from doeing good dedes. For if the labourer before seed- season should say to himselte, I will sow no corne, because the birdes & wormes of the earth may eat vp the seed which I shall sow before it take roote in the earth, or when it is sprung vp and greene it may be eaten by beastes before it ripen and be gathered in: if I lay the labourer should thus discourse with himselte and conceauē such friuolous difficulties, he would neuer sow , and so consequently neuer reape , whence would ensue that we should haue no bread: but the prudent and wise labourer doth till and sow his land and doth his endeaour, and committeth the successe to the diuine prouidence: So should you endeaour to proceed in good workes without feare of vaine glory: for albeit it doe a litle trouble you for the time, the better and securer part doth still remaine vnto you.

*Grace
doth pro-
fit more
in Reli-
gion then
in the
World.*

An other asking him if one could obtaine and possesse the grace of God remayning in the world: he answered that he could : but I had rather, said he, haue one grace in Religion, then ten in the world: because in Religion grace doth easily encrease and is better there conserued, a man being there sequestred from the tumult and affection of worldly folies the capitall ennemies of grace: and with all the Religious his companions by charitable remonstrances and by example of their holy conuersation doe with draw him from euill, and inuite and induce him to goodnes. But the grace which some may haue in the world may also be easily lost; because the sollicitude of worldly affaires and cogitations, which is mother of distraction, doth hinder and trouble the sweetness of grace, and other worldlinges by prophane and dishonest conuersations, by scandalous examples, and by diuillish hauntes and companies, doe diuert him from good and allure him to lewdnes: so that as it were by force they depriue him of his soules saluation, it being no part of their custome to further a vertuous life, but indeede to deride and scoffe att such as liue Christianly, nor to reprehend the vicious and enemies of God, but to flatter and sooth them. Whereupon I conclude, that it is farre more secure to possesse one grace with a helpe that may conserue it, then ten with such hazard, yea in such imminent perill.

A seculer man hauing once requested him to pray for him, he answered: Brother pray for they selfe: for sith thy selfe mayst haue recourse and access to God, why goest thou not? why wouldest thou send an other on thine arrant? this man againe told him that he acknowledged himselfe so great a sinner, that he knew himselfe to farre remote and

sepa-

separated from God: But he, being holy and well beloued of his diuine maiesty, had more credit with him, and had also more occasion to performe the same, because he more often spake with God in prayer. Where to the S. replied: Brother, if all the corners of the city were full of gold and siluer, and that it were cryed by sound of trompett through the streetes, that whoeuer would, might take therof, would you send an other to fetch therof, or would you goe your selfe? the man answered that in deed he would not therein trust the best friend he had, but himselfe would goe in personne. Thus, said Brother Giles, shouldest thou doe with God: for all the world is full of his diuine Maiesty, & each one hath power to finde him, goe therefore they selfe with faith, and send no other for thee.

An other telling the holy Father, that he was determined to goe visit the holy reliques of Rome, he answered: seek first to know good mony from euill: therby insinuating vnto him, that pilgrimages doe not indifferently benefitt all pilgrimes, but only those that know and can discern good and resist euill; calling sinnes and euill examples, bad mony, and vertue, pure metall.

*Aduise
for pil-
grimes.*

A Religious was exceedingly troubled that he could not so well accommodate the diett for the other Religious as to giue them all contentment, and therefore repayed to Brother Giles to take his aduice how to support with patience their murmures: the holy Father answered: Knowe you my child, what is best to doe? when the Religious shall say, these potage they are too fresh, or such like thing, take a dish-full of it, and eat it all, then make some shew to haue found it very sauory, and say aloud; O excellent potage! the dish-full which I haue eaten is worth an hundred duckettes: thus doinge in all other things, if you beleieue me, as I thinke you will, you shall shortly liue in repose, and shall conceaue such comfort: that nothing shall any more trouble you, but you will pray to God that they often speake such thinges vnto you.

*Consola-
tion and
counsaile
for the
kichen.*

Two Religious being expelled Sicilie by the Emperour Federick, a rebell to the Romane Church, they came to visit Brother Giles, who hauing with great charity entertayned them, he asked them whence they were, and whence they came, and they answered that they were Sicilians, and had bin expelled their contry by the Emperour, an enemy of the Church: which the holy Father hearing, enflamed with zeale to their soules, he sharply reprehended them in these wordes: what, are you so bold as to affirme that you are expelled your contry? doubtles you should no longer call your selues Frere Minors, which sundry times with a loud voice repeating, he with great seruour said vnto them: Brethren, you haue grievously sinned against that great rebell to God, the Emperour Federick, of whome hauing receaued so great a fauour, you

*Frere
Minors
are pil-
grimes
ouer all
the world*

should also haue compassion of him, and pray to almighty God to voutsafe to mollifie his hart, and not murmure against him. And if you be true Frere Minors, you cannot truly say that he hath expelled you your contry, for Frere Minors haue nothing whatsoeuer in this life proper vnto them: so that this Prince hath taught you to be true Frere Minors and Pilgrimes on earth.

Certaine pious discourses of the holy Father Brother Giles.

First, a discourse of the way of saluation, and of perfection.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

IF thou desire to saue they soule, said the illuminated seruant of God, demaund not the reason of whatsoeuer befallerth thee by meanes of any humane creature. If thou wilt saue thee, labour diligently to remoue and sequester thy selfe from all the consolations and honours that creatures can giue thee: because the diuels of consolations are the more subrill, and more mischieuous then those of tribulations: therefore also the falles of man are greater and more frequent by consolations, then by afflictions and tribulations.

All falles & greatest perilles, arriue principally by bearing the head to high: as all good proceedeth & is gotten by submission therof. Wretched are those that seeke to be honoured for their vices and lewd behaviours.

If thou acknowledge to haue offended the Creatour of all things, support with patience the difficulties and grieuances arysing by each of them: for thou hast no cause to complaine of them, sith euery thing arriueth vnto thee from the hand of God.

If any one contend against thee, though it seeme iust to thee to gaine, yet loose: for doinge otherwise, when thou shalt thinck to haue gained, then shalt thou haue lost.

If thou desire to see well, crush, and thrust out thine eyes: if thou wilt heare perfectly, stop thine eares, and make thee deafe: if thou wilt speake well and discreetly, cutt off thy tongue, and become mute: If thou wilt doe euery thing well, cutt off thy handes: If thou wilt make perfect vse of all thy membres, rent them, cutt them off and separat them from thy body: If thou desire to liue, kill thy selfe: If thou wilt eat well, fast: If thou desire to repose and sleep well, watch: If thou wilt gaine much, learne to loose: O whata great wisdom it is to know how to doe althings well! but this not permitted to all.

Grace and vertue are the true ladders to ascende to heauen, as vices and

sinnes

sinnes are the way and stumbling block that tūbleth vs into hel. Sinnes are the poyson and venime that murdereth the soules; vertues with good workes are most perfect treacle and restoratiues.

Grace doth vnite and incorporate to it selfe other grace, and as- sumeth not to it selfe any vice. Grace will not be prayled, nor will vice be checked or be blamed. The soule repositeth in humility, whose daughter is patience. God seeth the purity of the hart, and deuotion tasteth him.

If thou loue, thou shalt be loued: if thou feare, thou shalt be feared: If thou accomodate thy selfe to liue well with others, they wil comply to liue well with thee. Happy is he that loueth, and yet desireth not to be loued. Happy is he that serueth, and yet desireth not to be serued. Happy is he, that knoweth how to liue with all, and yet desireth not that all liue with him: But because these thinges are great, they that haue litle iudgement attaine not vnto them.

Three thinges are very profitable to man, and no euill can befall him that possesseth them. The first, if he voluntarily support all the afflictions and crosses that happen vnto him. The second, if for whatsoeuer he doeth or receiueth, he the more hūble himselfe. The third, if he sincerely loue that richesse which cānot be seene with corporall eyes. Those thinges which are most abādoned & contēned by worldlings, are most esteemed & honoured of God & his saintes: For the sinfull & miserable mā abhorreth whatsoeuer he should loue, & loueth what he should hate.

This worthy seruant of God intending to declare to a deuout man the obligation we haue to serue God, vsed this parabol vnto him: A mā hauing neither feet, handes, nor eyes, had one day by a friend of his this demaund made vnto him: Tell me, what wouldest thou bestow on him that should giue thee feet? and he answered, that he would giue him an hundred duckettes, if he had so much. And if one would giue thee handes? he answered, he would giue him al his welth, moueables & immoveables. If one would giue thee eyes? to him, layd he, I would oblige my selfe in seruice al my life. You must now thé, brother, that in this world God hath giuen thee feet, handes, and eyes, and the whole body, with all thy réporall and spirituall substance: & therfore thou must endeaour to please him, and to acknowledge such and so many benefites, for which thou oughtest to serue him all the time of thy life.

*Notable
discourse
of the
obligatiō
we haue
to serue
God.*

A discourse of Faith.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

ALl the thinges that can be seene, related, or imagined, are as nothing, in comparison of those that cannot be seene, heard, or cōceaued.

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ued. All the wisest and most holy personnes that haue bin, are, and shalbe, who haue spoaken and shall speake of God, haue sayd nothing, nor can say any thing in comparifon of what he is, no more then the point of a needle in respect of the heauens, the earth, and all the creatures there in containyd, yea a thousand times lesse.

Two Religious of the Order of S. Dominick, one day visiting Brother Giles, and discoursing with him of faith, one of them sayd: saint Iohn the Euangelist hath recorded many merueilous thinges of God. Wherto the holy Father answered: Brother, S. Iohn hath sayd nothing of God: The Religious replied Father, consider well, if you please, what you say; for S. Augustin is of opinion that if S. Iohn had spoaken more highly of God, no mortall man could haue vnderstood him. Br. Giles then againe, I tell you brother, and once againe I tell you, that S. Iohn hath said litle or nothing of God. These Religious being much troubled and scandalized at the holy Father would needes be gon, and turning away, Br. Giles stayed them and shewed them a very high mountaine whereon was the oratory of Certone, neere where vnto they then were, and sayd vnto them: If there were one mountaine made of a thousand together so great as that you see, and at the foot therof a litle bird did eat of it, tell me, brethren, I pray you, how much would he diminish of that mountaine every day, euery month euery yeare, yea in an hundred yeares; they answered him, that in a thousand yeares he would consume so litle as should not be perceaued. The holy Father therupon inferred: Know you my Brethren, that the eternall diuinity is so immensue, and is a mountaine of such eminent height, that S. Iohn who was as a bird, hath said litle or nothing in comparifon of the greatnes of God. These Religious acknowledging how prudently Brother Giles had spoaken, fell at his feet, confessing their errors: and so returned exceedingly edified.

A pregnant argument against the infidelity of covetous persons.

Br. Giles one day discoursing of spirituall matters with a lawyer that was a Iudge in some place. O Iudge, sayd he, beleeeue you that the recompenses which God promisseth his seruantes are great? the Iudge answered, he did. Br. Giles proceeding, sayd: I will proue that you doe not. How much are you worth? the Iudge answered: about a thousand crownes. Well, said the Father, se now how you beleeeue it only in wordes; for tel me, if you could giue your thousand crownes for an hundred thousand, would you not esteeme it a great gaine, & would you not presently employ them? I beleeeue you would, and yet you will not giue them for the kingdome of heauen. What followeth then, but that you doe not much esteeme, nor much valew the glory of the heauenly kingdome, in regard of the friuolous follies of this world? And the reason is, because you haue no liuely faith. Yet the Iudge vnwilling to yield, replied

plyed to Br. Giles: Father, beleuee you that euery one worcketh as much as he beleueth? the holy Father answered: he that beleueth well and perfectly, worcketh and performeth worckes correspondent, as did the sainctes, who did all the good they could, and haue accomplished, by pious desires what they could not performe in effect. And if one haue a perfect and lively faith, he would arriue to that estate, as God would giue him a perfect knowledge and assurance euen of diuine things, as layth the Apostle to the Romanes: I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, neither things present, nor things to come, neither might, nor height, nor depth, nor other creature shalbe able to separate vs from the charity of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord. And the man that assuredly hopeth this eternall & foueraigne recompence, doth not regard any afflictio: as on the contrary no good can satisfie him that despaireth of the eternal good: in so much as a sinner should neuer despair of the mercy of God whiles he hath life; considering that there is no tree so thorny & disordered, but men if they list can prune and rectifie it. Much lesse can there be so great a sinner in the world, as that God cannot adorne him with his graces and vertues.

Rom. 8.

None ought to despair.

*A discours of Charity, and of what the Prophet meant when he said,
that all his friendes did deceaue him.*

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

Charity is the principall of all the vertues: happy is he that feeleth not in himselfe any disgust of the thinges which he ought alwayes to desire. Brother Giles put this question to a Religious with whome he was very familer: doe you beleuee that I loue you? the Religious answered, he did. Wel then, said the holy Father, beleuee it no more: for a creature ought not sincerely to loue but the Creatour, who is pure and infinite. An other Religious said to the holy Father: I beseech you Father, make me vnderstand how that must be interpreted which the Prophet saith: Euery friend deceiueth. Wherto he answered: I deceiue you, in that I doe not search your good as I doe mine owne. For the more I repute your good to be mine owne, the lesse shall I deceaue you, & the more a man reioyceth att his neighbours good, the more doth himselfe participate therein: & therefore if you desire to participate therof, strue to reioyce therat, & to procure Charity is the truest & most sure way of saluation, sith that therby one doth not only reioyce att the good of his neighbour, but is also grieued att his crosses: he beleueth and iudgeth well of others, and euill of himselfe: he honoureth others, and mispriseth himselfe. He that will not honour an other, shall not be honou-

Ierem. 9.

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red, and he that knoweth not himselfe shall not be knowne: he that will not weary himselfe, shall not repose: also the greatest of all labours and the most meritorious, is to labour in piety and benignity: he that doeth a good worck without loue and charity, is not gratefull to God nor to his sainctes: but he that for the loue of God maketh himselfe poore of temporall substance, shalbe rich of such as are celestial. A man then ought to choose and loue diuine things and misprize particuler things, for what can be greater then to know how to prayse the benefites of God, and to check himselfe for his proper malice? I would I had bin taught in this schoole from the beginning of the world, and there would study to the end therof, if I were so long to liue, there to contemplate the prayse dew to the benefites of God, and the reprehension and chasticement due to my euill worckes. True it is that if I must committ an errour, I had rather it were in the consideration of my wickednes, then in the acknowledgement of the benefites receaued of God. For if we see many that for some litle seruice done them retourne many prayles and thanckes, how much more are we obliged in that kind of acknowledgement vnto almighty God? And in deed a man ought neuer to make any comparision with this loue towards him that hath a will to deliuer vs from all miseryes and to conduēt vs to the fruition of al good, and that would euen dye to procure vs to liue.

A discourse of humility.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

LUC. 18.

A Man cannot attaine to the knowledge of God, but by meane of humility, such that the true way to ascend on high is to debase ones selfe. All the euils and all the ruines of this world proceed of pride, as is seene in the euill Angell and in the first man, wherof the one was created in heauen and the other in Paradise; which also may be obserued in the Pharisee spoken of in the Ghospel, and in many others: And on the contrary, all good that euer hath bin done, hath bin wrought by humility, as is remarqued in the most sacred Virgin, in the Publican, in the Theefe, and others. But good God, why doe we not ordinarily carry on our shoulders some weighty burthen to crush downe our hard head, and to debase and humble it? A Religious one day demanding of Br. Giles how one might shunne pride, he answered: Brother, wash your handes, put your mouth where your feet are, consider your sinnes, and haue contrition for them, and then often incline your selfe towards the ground. Wretched is he that desireth glory and honour for his owne sinnes & vanities. A man is ascended to an high degree of humility, when he

he acknowledgeth that himselfe is contrary to his owne good. I also esteeme it a branch of humility to yeld to an other, and not to appropriat to ones selfe. I dare affirme that as one ought to attribute to God all goodnes as proper vnto him, so to our selues all euill. Happy is he that sheweth himselfe so vile before me, as he is before God. Happy is he that walketh faithfully vnder the obediēce and iudgement of an other, as the holy Apostles did, after they were replenished with the holy Ghost. He that will haue peace and tranquillity in him, lett him repute al men greater then himselfe. Happy is he that desireth not to be seene in his wordes and behaiours that are commendable: but rather in the compunction and abiection wherein the diuine grace putteth him. He that is the holiest man in the world and reputeth himselfe most vile, he hath true humility. Humility knoweth not how to speake, and dareth not be talkatiue. Humility is like the brightnes of heauen: for as of the same brightnes and of vapours doe proceed thunders and earth quakes, wherof in an instant no more is seene, so humility doth ruine vices, wickednes, and the high toures of her ennemy pride, and then causeth a man after the performance of great matters, to repute himselfe nothing. By humility a man findeth the grace of God, and peace with men. For euen as if a mightie Prince would send his owne daughter into a farre country, he would not mount her on a restiue and proud horse, but on a gentle nagge that shall amble easily and securely: euen so God as soueraine king, giueth not his grace to the proud, but only to the humble.

A discourse of the feare of God.

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

THe holy feare of God expelleth out of man impious worldly feare, and is the guard of those goodes which cannot be expressed, not so much as by imaginatiō: But to haue this feare is a speciall gift, & not graunted to all. He that feareth not, sheweth that he hath nothing to loose. The feare of God guideth and gouerneth man, and caueth him to find grace with his diuine maiesty, by which whē he hath receaued this feare, he conserueth it, and hauing lost it, doth recouer it. All reasonable creatures that haue forgotten themselves in foule disorders, had neuer fallen therinto, if they had this gift of God, which is proper vnto the sainctes. And the more one is replenished with grace, the more is he humble and fearfull. Now albeit this vertue is least esteemed of men, yet is it not therefore lesse then others: for a man that in regard of his enormous offences committed against God,

God,

God, is worthy of death, cannot haue any assurance wherewith to shew himselfe in his diuine presence. Happy then is he who acknowledgeth that to dwell in the world, is to be in a prison, and that there one daily offendeth God. A man should alwayes feare that pride conduct him not into hell. Thou oughtest to haue feare of thy selfe and thy like, and to carry thy selfe respectfully and warily: for a man that liueth in the middelt of his ennemies, cannot be in perfect assurance. Our flesh is our enemy, which with the deuill is continually aduerse to our Soule. A man should more feare to be surmounted and ouercome by his owne malice, then by any other thing: for it is impossible for a man to ascend to the glory of God, or there to perseuer without a holy feare. Not to haue it, is a signe of perdition. This feare causeth one to obey with humility, and to stoop euē to the earth vnder the yoke of holy obedience, and he that hath the greater feare, is the more deuout in prayer, and he that hath the grace to pray hath obtrayned no litle grace of God. The workes of men appeare they neuer so great, ought not to be iudged by humane iudgement, but according to the diuine will and institution. Therefore ought we (my Brethren in IESVS. CHRIST) euer to liue in feare.

A discourse of Patience.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

HE that for the loue of God could support with patience all afflictions, should in short time obtaine abundance of graces, and should be Lord of this world, and haue one foot in the other. All thee good and euill which a man doeth, he doth it of himselfe: therefore thou shouldest not be scandalized if one doe thee iniury, but shouldest rather haue compassion of him. Support iniuries patiently for the loue thou owest to thy neighbour: how much a man is prepared for the loue of God to endure abuses and affrontes, so great is he before his diuine maiesty, and no more: and how much he is feeble and weakly prepared to support the same things, so much lesse is he in the presence of God, and doth not know what God is. If thou heare any one speake ill of thee, asstist him; if he speake well of thee, referre that to God. If thou wilt make thy part the better, make it ill, and that of an other, good: I meane thou must praise the workes and good wordes of others, and blame thine owne. If thou wilt gaine, loose: for in the end when thou shalt thinck to haue gained, thou shalt find that thou hast lost, because this way is such, that though it seeme to lead to saluation, it tendeth to perdition. We doe not orderly support afflictions, and therefore

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are not fit to receaue and support spirituall consolations.

Doe not wrong or iniury to any, and if it be offred to thee, support it patiently for the loue of God, and in remission of thy sinnes: for it is more meritorious to support a great iniury for the loue of IESVS CHRIST without murmure, then to feed euery day an hundred poore people, and to fast much and austerely. What doth it profit a man to misprile himselfe, to afflict his body by fastinge, to pray, to watch and to vse discipline, if after all that, he cannot support an iniury done by his neighbour, for which he should receaue a greater recompence, then for whatsoeuer he could endure by his owne election? To support tribulations and afflictions without murmure doth exceedingly purge the sinnes of a man, yea more then doeth a great effusion of teares: and therefore happy is he that supporteth all these afflictions patiently, in regard that he shall reape therby a great fruit of consolation. Happy is he that neither hath, nor desireth any consolation from whatsoeuer creature vnder heauen. He doth not hope for any recompence from God, that is humble and peaceable, only, when althings succed according to his will.

To suffer iniuries freely is of exceeding merit.

He that hath alwayes his sinnes before his eyes, will not faile to make his profit of all the afflictions that befall him. Thou must acknowledge all the good thou hast to proceed from God, and all the euill from thy sinnes: for if one man had done all the good deedes that all the men in the world hane done, doe, or shall doe, withall that, if he duely consider himselfe, he shall find himselfe meerly aduerse to his owne good. This holy Father being demanded by a Religious what one should doe, if those great tribulations forespoaken by our Sauour to arriue att the day of the generall iudgement, should come to passe in our time, he answered: If the heauens should raine sharpe stones and flintes, they could not hurt vs, if we were such as we should be. Know brother, if a man persist in his duety, all the euill that he can endure, will turne to his good: for as to him that hath a disordered will, the good doth tourne into euill, so to him that hath a pure will, the euill doth tourne into good. And all good is interieur in man, so that it cannot be seene. The grievous infirmities, great labours, and molestfull offences which we endure, cause the euill spirittes which are about vs to fly. If thou wilt be saued, neuer seeke to haue iustice don thee against any creature whatsoeuer, because holy and vertuous personnes thinck only how to doe well, and to endure euill. If thou acknowledge to haue offended God the Creatour of althings, acknowledge also thy desert to be persecuted by all creatures, which reuenge the iniuries thou hast don to their Creatour. Therefore oughtest thou with much patience to support to be crossed & afflicted by all creatures, thou hauing no reason to alleadge a-

A meane to get patience.

The exercise of the vertuous is to doe good, and to suffer euill.

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gainst them, in regard that thou deseruest to be corrected by them. The vertue of a man that conquereth himselfe is in deed great, for thereby he surmounteth all his ennemies, and maketh purchase of all good. It were a great vertue for a man to content himselfe to be ouercome of all the men of the world, for so he should become truly lord of all the world. If thou wilt be saued, labour to remoue from thee all hope and cogitation of whatsoeuer consolation may arriue vnto thee by any mortall creature, because the falles proceeding of consolations, are greater and more ordinary, then those of afflictions. The nature of a horse is then esteemed noble, though he fly with great fury and dexterity, when he permitteth himselfe to be guided and gouerned by the discretion of the rider that stoppeth him att his pleasure, and maketh him goe whither he list. So when a man feeleth himselfe spurred by anger, must he doe, and permitt himselfe to be gouerned and directed by some one that is to correct him: yea he should desire to giue as a recompence for the loue of God all that he hath, to haue giuen him spurnes with the feet, bastonades, buffettes, and to haue his beard torne off, haire by haire.

A Religious one day in presence of Br. Giles did murmur att a rigorous obedience enioyned him: to whome this holy Father said. Brother the more you murmur, the more you burden your selfe: and with the more deuotion and humility you submitt your neck vnder the yoke of obedience, the more easy and light shall you find it: you will not be injured in this world, and yet wilbe honoured in the other: you will not heare a displeasing word, and wilbe one of the Blessed: you will not labour, and desire to repose: But you deceaue your selfe, for honour is purchased by reproach, benediction by malediction, and repose by labour: the prouerb being true: Troutes are not taken with dry handes: and therfore lett it not trouble thee if thy neighbour sometime offend thee, for euen Martha, that was so holy, would prouoke our lord against her sister Magdalen, not without reason complayning of her: and neuertheless Mary was more sparing of her membres then Martha in the vse of them, but she laboured more then she in contemplation, though without Martha, Mary had lost her speech, sight, hearing and tast. Endeauour then to be vertuous and gratefull to our lord IESVS CHRIST, and fight courageously against vices, support patiently afflictions, considering that there is nothing in this world of greater meritt, then to conquer ones selfe, and that it is most difficult for a man to conduct his soule to God, without this victory.

*Troutes
are not
taken
without
wetting
the handes.*

LUC. 10.

A dis-

A discourse of Idlenesse.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

THe idle man looseth this world and the next, it being impossible to purchase any vertue without diligence and labour. He that may rest in a secure place, should not put himselfe in a place of doubt or danger. He is in a secure place, that labourereth for God. The yonge man that will put himselfe to paine for God, doth also shunne the kingdome of heauen. And if endeaour doe not further, at least let not negligence be an impediment and hinderance: for as idlenes is the way to hell, so good worckes are the way that leadeth to heauen. A man ought to be very carefull and diligent to conserue the grace he hath receaued of God, faithfully labouring therein: for oftentimes the fruit doth perish by meane of the lease, and the graine by the huske. God graunterh to some, fruit, and a few leaues, and to others neither the one nor the other. I doe more esteeme the conseruation of the benefittes receaued of God, then the getting of the. He shall neuer be rich, that knoweth how to gett, but not to keep. Wherefore many after much gaine, haue bin neuer the richer: because they knew not how to conserue; yet is it not so great a matter to know how to conserue, vnlesse also one know how to gett. There are some that gaining but litle, become incontinently rich, because they know well how to keepe what they haue gotten. The riuers would not be so often dry, if running continually, they did not cast themselves into the sea.

Man demaundeth of God, graces without measure and end, and yet will make vse therof with measure and end: but he that wil be loued and recompenced without end, ought to loue and serue without end. Happy is he that employeth his time, body, and spiritt in the loue of God, that attendeth no recompence vnder heauen for the good he doeth. If one should say to a very poore man, Friend, I lend thee this my house to make vse therof for three dayes, in which time, if thou knowest how to employ it, thou mayest gaine an inestimable treasure; this being assured and confirmed vnto him for most eident, would not he vse all his endeaour to make this gaine? That which is lent vnto vs of our lord is our flesh, our life, and whatsoeuer benefitt we can make therein, is in a maner but as three dayes. If the graine of corne doe not corrupt, it cannot only produce no fruit, but it also withereth and consumeth entierlie of it selfe without any encrease: wherefore is it not better to make it to rott, to the end it may spring, be-
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gathered, threshed in due time, and then layd vp into the garner of eternall life.

A man doth seldome take counsaile to doe ill: but being to doe good, the first thing is to take counsaile of all the world. The prouerb sayth, one must not putt the pott to the fire in expectation of a promise: A mā is not happy for hauing only a good will, but he must rather with all possibilty labour to accomplish the same by good and pious workes, because God giueth his grace to a man to the end he follow the same.

A man one time praying Brother Giles to giue him some consolation, he answered: Endeauour to doe well, and thou shalt be comforted: for if a man doe not prepare in himselfe a place for God, he shall not find him in his creatures. What man is there, that will not doe that which is best, not only for his soule, but euen for his body in that which concerneth this life? I can truely affirme, that whosoever shaketh off the sweet and light yoke of our Sauour, shall find it afterward far more painfull: and he that therewith burdeneth himselfe most, att lenth shall find it most light.

Would to God all men would doe that which they may acknowledge to be best for their bodyes euen in this world: for he that made the other world hath made this also, and can giue to man in this world the benefittes which he giueth in the other, and the body feeleth the happinesse of the soule. A Religious hearing Brother Giles to speake thele wordes, sayd vnto him: Tell me Father, if you please, we may perhappes dye before we haue any experience of any good: The holy Father answered: The Furriers are knowen by skinnes, Shomakers by shooes, and forgers by iron: But tell me, Brother can a man be knowne by an art that he neuer practised? Thinck you that Princes and Potentates bestow great fauours and prefermentes on sottish personnes and without iudgement? there is no probability. Good workes are the true way and meane to the fruition of all happines, as ill deedes to fall into all miseries, happy is he that feeleth no scandall att whatsoever matter vnder heauen: and he that is edified with whatsoever he seeth and heareth, and that amongest all thinges chooseth only those that he may vse to the most benefitt of his soule.

A discourse of the contempt of the World.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

VNhappy is the man that setleth his hart, his desires, and his hopes on earthly thinges, for which he looseth all celestiaall happinesse. If the Eagle that soareth so high, had to each of her wings

winges fastened one of the beames of the Carpeters worck att S. Peters in Rome, it is most certaine she could not mount into the ayre. As I obserue many that labour for the body, so doe I find few that trauell for the soule. Many take exceeding paines for corporall affaires, breaking and cutting the marbles, digging mountaynes, labouring the earth, furrowing the sea, and performing many other painfull exercises: but who is he that laboureth manfully and with seruour for the soule?

The auaricious is like the Mole, that thincketh there is no other good but to digge the earth, and therfore therein setteth vp his rest: yet doubtlesse ther is an other treasure vnknowne to the Mole. The birdes of heauen, the beastes of the earth, and the fishes of the sea content themselves when they haue sufficient to eat: but because man cannot content himselfe with what the earth affordeth, he alwayes sigheth after somewhat else. It is certaine that he was not created principally for these base things, but for such as are high and supreme, for so much as the body was made for the soule, and this world for loue of the other. This world is a field of such quality, as the that hath the better and greater part therof, hath the worse share. This holy Father to this purpose alledged that the holy Father saint Francis did not loue the Antes, because of their ouer much care to assemble their prouisions: but loued the birdes much more, because they made no prouision to liue vpon, but depending on the diuine providence, made only search from houre to houre according to their need.

*The auaricious
resembleth
the Mole.*

*He that
hath the
greatest
part in
this
world
hath the
worst.*

A discourse of Chastity.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

A Religious demaunded of the venerable Br. Giles, how a man might best keepe himselfe from the vice of the flesh: and he answered: he that will remoue a grosse stone or beame, vseth therin more industry then force: so must he doe that will preserue his chastity: for it is like to a most cleare looking glasse, which may be blemished and stayned in his brightnes by one only breath.

It is impossible that a mā can attaine the diuine grace, whiles he is delighted in sensuall pleasures. Consider althings, behold, tourne and retourne vp and downe, and from one side to an other, you shall finde att length that nothing is more necessary then to fight against the fleish, which seeketh day and night to deceaue and betray vs: he that surmounteth it hath ouercome all his ennemies, and becommeth afterward assuredly capable of all happines.

He would ordinarily say, that if he were to make choice of the vertu-

es, he would choose chastity. Being asked what he called chastity, he answered: I call chastity the conseruation of all the senses of the body in the grace of our Lord.

*A man
may be
drunken
with his
owne
tunne.*

A maryed man that was deuoutly affected towards him, was one day present when he prayed chastity, and sayd vnto him: Father I desire to be resolued of you, if liuing with my wife, and keeping fidelity towards her, I am secure touching this point? Br. Giles answered him: what, doe you not know that a man may as well be droncken with the wine of his owne tunne, as with that of an other mannes?

A discourse of Temptation.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

A Great grace cannot be possessed in peace, but that there wil arise many contrarieties: yea the higher degree of grace a man hath, the more shall he be assaulted of the deuill: but a man should not therefore omitt to prosecute his course of vertue, for the more violent the combatt is, the more excellent shalbe the crowne, when he shall haue ouercome. And if any doe misse this employment, lett him know that it is because he is not such as he ought to be; besides this is to walke alwayes in the direct way of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, in which all trauell and displeasure is sweet; but a man that followeth the course and way of the world, findeth displeasure and labour euen till death; so that albeit the more a man shalbe perfect in vertues, the more will vices be contrary vnto him: yet hating them so much, att euery vice that he surmounteth, he purcatheth a great vertu, and becomming victorious ouer all kind of vices, wherby he might haue bin tormented, he shall not faile of a great recompence for it, and vpon whatsoeuer occasion he omitteth to walke in the way of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, for the same occasion he looseth his recompence.

*Compa-
rison of
spirituall
exercises
with la-
bouring.*

The burden of temptations, is often like to the trauell of the labourer that findeth a great peece of land which he is to worck vpon, couered with thistles & thornes, so that he is constrained with great trouble to cleare the same before his labour be auayleable: in such sort that he often repenteth to haue enterprised so painfull a businesse, in regard of the great expences and bodily labour that he is enforced to employ therein: For first he considereth that he must leuell and make euen all the hillockes that are vnequall with the ground, and therof seeth not the fruit: Secondly he cutteth or burneth the bushes, thornes and thistles therein, yet seeth no fruit therof: Thirdly with much labour and sweate he diggeth vp the rootes, neither yet seeth the fruit. Fourthly, he openeth the

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the earth with the plough-share to cleanse the same, yet hath no sight of the corne that is the ground of such his labour. Fiftly he tilleth it the second time and maketh it into furrowes: Sixtly he soweth his graine. Seauently when the corne is sprung vp he cleanseth it and rooteth out the weedes: Eighthly he doth haruest the corne into his barne: Ninthly with much labour and sweat he separateth it from the chaffe causing it to be threshed, winnowed, sifted and very diligently cleansed: Tenthly and lastly, he transporteth the corne into his garner; and for the contentment he conceaueth to see the fruit of his paines and labours, he then forgetteth them, and purposeth to vndertake yet much greater, for the only ioy he hath of his haruest. Now the like effect is in the temptations and labours which one endureth in this world, for the spirituall fruit and contentment, which he is to reape therof in the life euerlasting.

A Religious hauing one time conference with Br. Giles, sayd vnto him: Father it is recorded that S. Bernard once sayd his seauen penitentiall psalmes, without euer thincking of other matter, nor was assailed with any distractiōs. The holy Father answered: I would better esteeme a castle valerously assaulted, and more courageously defended.

A discourse of Penance.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

A Iudge discoursing with Brother Giles of spirituall matters; asked him by what meanes seculer personnes might ascend to the state and glory of vertue. Wherto the holy Father answered: A man ought first to procure sorrow and contrition for his sinnes, then to confesse them with bitterness and grieve to haue offended God, and afterward to fulfill the penance that his ghostly Father shall enioyne him. So being in good estate, he must carefully keepe himselfe from offending God, and shunne all occasions that may induce him to sinne, and finally must exercise himselfe in good workes. Blessed be the temporall affliction that conuerteth to a mannes happines, and accused be the pleasure that tourneth to his misery. A man should endure and support affliction in this world with a good will, sith our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST hath giuen vs an example in himselfe. Happy is he that hath true contrition of his sinnes, and lamenteth day and night, nor will seeke his consolation in this world, but where all the desires of his hart shalbe satisfied.

A dis-

A discourse of Prayer.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

*Instance
requisite
in prayer*

Prayer is both the beginning and perfection of all good. Prayer illuminateth the soule, and by it good and euill are discerned. All sinners ought to make this prayer vnto God, that he will giue the knowledge of their owne sinnes, of the diuine mercy, and of the benefittes receaued of IESVS CHRIST. He that cannot pray, knoweth not God. It is necessary for all those that are to be saued, if they haue vie of reason, to apply themselves to prayer, to obtayne mercy of God. Lett vs suppose that a widdow and lady which were much retyred, simple and chaste, had a sonne, that for some crime committed were prisoner & condemned to death: This Mother though honorable and retyred, would she not repayre to the Prince, with abondance of teares to seeke fauour for her sonne? This vrgent necessity, no doubt, for the extreme loue of this widdow to her sonne (though he were very rarely seene to goe out of her house) would enforce her to runne through the streetes, with cryes, weepinges and lamentations, to sollicite all those whome she thought might any way asist her in sauing the life of her sonne: which she would attempt without any feare or respect of the modesty requisite to her degree and quality. In like manner he that knoweth his sinnes, knoweth consequently to aske pardon for them with shame and humility.

*Humility
necessary
in prayer*

There was one that growing as it were into despaire, for that in prayer he receaued not the grace of God which he desired, complayned therof to Br. Giles, who answered him: Brother, I counsaile you to goe on sweetly, and to haue patience; for, as there being lees in a vessel, one doth not therefore shake and entermingle it together with the wine, which were it neuer so good would be vtterly spilled thereby: And as, though sometimes the mill-stone grindeth not good meale, one doth not therefore breake it, but with time and patience repaireth it: so must you doe, and thinck your selfe vnworthy to receaue any consolation in prayer: considering that albeit a man had liued from the beginning of the world till this present, and were to liue till the end thereof, and should every day in prayer power a quart of teare-water out of his eyes, yet should he not att the end of the world be worthy to receaue any consolation from God.

*Distractions
in
prayer
are pro-
cured by
the deuil.*

An other Religious demanding of this his Father, why a man was more tempted in his prayer then in any other time, he answered: When any one hath a proceffe in a kinges Court, and knoweth that his aduersary

uerfary seeketh to gett some fauour againſt him att the kinges handes, he endeauoureth with all meanes and poſſibility to hinder his repaire to the Court: if he cannot, he procureth att leaſt that the king giue not eare vnto him, or at leaſt that he obtaine not his requeſt; and then vſeth all his indeauours to procure iudgement in his owne behalfe: Thus worcketh the deuill againſt vs. And therfore when you diſcourſe with any one, you ſhall very rarely perceauie the deuill to warre againſt you with his temptations: but if you goe about to recreat your ſoule with God in prayer, you ſhall incontinently feeble the ſhorttes of the enemy againſt you. But you muſt not therfore giue ouer prayer, but with great feruour and reſolution perſeuer, for there is the true and aſſured way, leading to the celeftiall contry: and he that for temptations omitteth prayer, is like to a coward that flyeth the combatt.

An other Religious ſaid to this holy Father: I ſee many that, when they are in prayer, incontinently obtaine the grace of deuotion and teares: but my ſelfe can neuer find any conſolation. Br. Giles answered: Brother, omitt not to continue prayer with your accuſtomed feruour. For if God giue not you his grace att firſt, he can giue it you att an other time: and that which he might haue giuen you in a day, or in a weeke, in a month, or in a yeare, he will giue you when he ſhall ſee it moſt conuenient and moſt neceſſary for you. But in the meane while faile not in your endeauour, and leaue the care of the reſt to the prouidence of God. For the maſter Cutler giueth many hammer-strokes on the iron, before the endeth a knife, and then att laſt finiſheth it with one blow.

*Conſolation for
thē that
prayer
without
feeling of
deuotion.*

A man ought to haue great care of his ſaluation, ſith that if it were poſſible that the whole world were heaped vp with men to the very cloudes, and of all them only one were to be ſaued, yet not one ſhould omitt to follow his vocation and procure the grace to be that one: for, to looſe the glory of Paradife is not a matter of ſmall importance, as to looſe the lachett of a ſhooe, or ſuch other thinge. But wretched as we are, there wanteth not one to giue, but to receaue: the reſections are prepared, but there is none ready to eat.

*One muſt
labour
for ſal-
uation.*

Many good worckes are commended in holy ſcripture, as to cloath the naked, to feed the hungry and other like thinges, but prayer ought to be in ſpirit and truth as our Lord IESVS CHRIST ſaith. The holy Religious are as wolues, who ſeldome goe forth in publike, vuleſſe vppon vrgent neceſſity, neither then doe they long remayne abroad.

Ioan. 4.

A Religious that was very familiar to Br. Giles asked him one time, why he did not more often goe abroad to viſitt the ſeculers that deſired to conferre with him. The holy Father answered him: I deſire

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to satisfie my neighbour without preiudice to my soule. Do not you beleue that sometimes I would giue my neighbour a thousand duckets if I had them, rather then I would giue him my selfe? the Religious answered, that he beleued him. Beleue you not also, sayd the holy Father, that I would giue my neighbour foure thousand duckets, rather then my selfe? The Religious answered, I beleue you. Br. Giles then inferred: Our Sauour sayth in the Gospell: he that forsaketh Father; Mother, Brothers, Sisters, kinred, friendes, and all other worldly things, for my sake, shall receaue an hundred fold in this world, and in the other, life euerlasting.

This holy Father seeing a gentleman, that was esteemed to be worth threescore thousand duckets, to enter into Religion sayd: The retribution which God giueth in this life is excessiue great, sith that to this man is to be deputed and hundred times threescore thousand duckets, but we are blind and worle then blind, that will neither know nor consider it.

This good Father on a time sayd: beleue me if we should see a man replenished with grace and vertues, we should not support the sight of his perfection: and if a man were perfectly spirituall, he could hardly permit and endure to see or heare any wordly thing, or to speake with any worldly personne but vpon vrgent necessity; but would affect to be alwayes solitary. He sayd of himselfe: I had rather be blind, then be the fairest, richest, wisest, and most noble in the world. This Religious asked him the reason. Because, said he, all things are apt to hinder my sure way; & this my blindness and want of sight, might be a guid and assistance vnto me.

A discourse of spirituall warinesse, and of consideration.

THE XXXIV. CHAPTER.

IF thou wilt tast the chieffest good, thou must sequester thy selfe from all sensual things: if thou wilt loue thy selfe well, thou must hate thy selfe: If thou wilt liue well, mortifie thy selfe: if thou wilt be rich, make thy selfe poore; if thou wilt liue deliciously, afflict thy selfe: if thou wilt liue in security, perseuer alwayes in feare: if thou wilt be exalted, humble thy selfe: if thou wilt be honoured, dispise thy selfe: if thou desire to haue that which is good, endure that which is euill: if thou wilt be blessed, support maledictions. O how great is his wisdom that can performe this! but because they are great matters, they are not graunted to all.

*Consider
thy selfe.*

If a man should liue a thousand yeares, and had nothing to doe without himselfe, he should find businesse enough within him, yea he were not able to cōpasse all that was necessary to be done. None should desire

to see, to heare, or to speake, but what were a furtherance to his spiri-
tual profit, and vpon whatsoeuer occasiō, should proceed no further. He
that will not know, shall not be knowne. But vnhappy are we if hauing
the giftes of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, we doe not know the: & they
that haue then not, seek not to haue them; a man imagineth God ac-
cording to his apprehension, but God is such as he is.

A discourse of the Actiue and Contemplatiue life.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

AS no man can conueniently attaine to the contemplatiue life, if
he be not sincerely and deuoutly exercised in the actiue, wherein
it is necessary that with all his cogitation he apply himselfe: so
he shall proue a true actiue man, who if he could feed all the poore of the
world, cloath them, and supply all their necessities, and doe good to all
churches and hospitalles, and this being done, each one should esteeme
him a lewd man, and he knowing so much, should not at all respect it,
nor forbear, but rather continue his pious workes, yea should the
more voluntarily and with greater seruour exercise them; as one that de-
sireth not any recompence in this life: considering that Martha, careful to
serue our Lord IESVS CHRIST, demanded assistance therein of her
Sister Mary Magdalen, and was reprehended of our lord, because she
would distract her sister from contemplation, who yet gaue not ouer her
good worke: so he that is truly actiue should not omit good workes
for whatsoeuer reprehension may be giuen him; sith he hopeth for no
recompence but in heauen.

Luce. 10.

A Religious came complaining to Br. Giles, that his brethren made him
to labour so much, that he had hardly time enough to pray, and that for
that cause he was determined to procure licence to remoue vnto an other
Couent, where he might with more repose serue God in prayer. Wherto
the holy Father thus answered: if you were in the Court of the king of
Frāce, & should demand of him a thousand marck in siluer, he might an-
swere, what hast thou don for me that may moue thee to demand such
a recompence? but if you had formerly done him some notable seruice,
you might with farre more assurance make such demand. Therefore if
you will serue God, you must first labour in obedience; sith it is a greater
vertue to doe one thing att the will of an other, then to doe two, att ones
owne pleasure. Then he added: No mā can obtaine to contēplation of the
glory of his diuine Maielty, but by seruour of spiritt & seruēt prayer, and
then is a man enflamed with the seruour of the holy Ghost & soareth vp
to diuine contēplation, when the hart is so disposed with the mēbers, that

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it neither

neither can nor will thinck of other thing then that which it possesseth and feeleth. He shalbe a perfect contemplatour who, hauing all his members cutt off, yea and his tongue, would neither thinck, procure, nor desire to haue any other member, nor whatsoeuer other thing he can imagine vnder heauen, and this by reason of the excellencie of the most delicious and inefable odour and sweetnes of contemplation. In that respect S. Marie Magdalé being prostrate att the feet of our lord IES. CHR. receaued and felt such a sweetnesse of his wordes, that she had no member in her, that could or would doe other thing then what she then did. Which she sufficiently testified, when her siter complayning att the want of her helpe, she answered nothing either by wordes or signes. But our Redeemer as her Aduocate and Procuratour answered for her: & withall she was employed in his seruice more excellently then Martha was. Now to contemplate is to be sequestred from men, and to remayne vnited alone with IESVS CHRIST.

*Notable
similitude.*

Br. Giles made this demand to a Religious of his Couent: Brother what say the Doctours of contéplation? the Religious answered: they speake diuersely. Will you, replied the holy Father, that I speake mine opinion theroff? the degrees of contéplation are, fire, vñction, extasie, rest, repose, and glory: then he added: a more expresse contemplation of God with the soule cannot be giuen, then that of the Espoule, with his Espouse: for the Spouse, before he receaueth his Espouse, sendeth her precious stones, iewels, and other ornamentes of price to adorne her: but whé they are together, the Espouse leaueth all those thinges to approach vnto her Spouse: so doe good workes and vertues adorne the soule as precious stones and sumptuous attire, and prayer vnitheth it vnto God.

An ancient Religious demaunded of Br. Giles, if the soule by extasie and contemplation did sometime euen in this life goe out of the body, and he answered, that it did: yea he assured him, that he knew a man yet liuing, whose soule being lifted vp in extasie, went out of the body, and forooke it, yea already vtterly forgetting the same. I beleue said the Religious, that such soule was exceedingly grieued to retourne into her body. Br. Giles then smilingly replied: Brother that which you say is true, yea most true.

This holy Father would often, in prayer and att other times with exceeding seruour, say: What art thou my God, of whome I demaund this? and what am I that aske it? I am a sack filled with dung, with loathsomenes and with wormes: and thou art lord of heauen and earth. And thus beginning his prayer, he would be incontinently eleuated and rapt into almighty God.

of

Of profitable science and vnfruitfull, of preaching and the interpretation of those wordes of the scripture: Ego rogau pro te Petre.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

THe Venerable Br. Giles would sometimes say lett him who desireth to be learned humble well his head, lett him be exercised in good worckes, and lett him rent his body on the earth, & God will giue him knowledge. It is a soueraine wisdom to doe good worckes, carefully to obse. ue the comandementes and to consider the iudgements of God. He once sayd to a Religious that would goe to a lecture att a Colledge: Tell me wherfore would you goe to the lecture? Know that the most worthy science is to feare and loue God: these two vertues will suffice you, a man hath knowledge according to his good worckes and no more. Be not only carefull to profit others, thou being obliged to be more carefull to benefitt thy selfe. We would often times know many thinges for others, and few for our selues. The word of God is not of him that heareth it, nor of him that vttereth it, but of him that putteth it in effect. Many not knowing how to swimme throw themselues into the water to helpe an other that they see in danger of drowning; but hauing aduentured too farte, they are drowned together: so that wheras there was but one in perill, two are lost by presumption: In purchasing about all thinges the saluation of thy owne soule as thou art obliged, thou shalt not omitt to assit others, but rather in doing good worckes for thy selfe, thou shalt also profit them that with thee well. The Preacher of the word of God is a messenger of his maiesty, to the end he be to the people a flaming light, a glittering glaasse, a standerd-bearer of his warryers. Happy is he that conducteth others by the assured way, that faileth not to walke the same way, and that inducing others to runne, standeth not still himselfe: and so if he helpe to enrich others, he remayneth not poore. I suppose a good Preacher preacheth more for himselfe then for others, and it seemeth that he who endeaouureth to draw soules out of an euill course to setle them in a good, ought to feare that himselfe be not seduced from the same good way, and led to the way of the deuill.

A Religious demanded of this holy Father, whither were better to preach well, or to doe well: he answered, tell me who doth merit more, ha that goeth in pilgrimage to saint Iames of Galicia, or he that sheweth him the way? I see many thinges that are not myne, I heare much that I vnderstand not, and I speake much that I

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doe not performe; and it seemeth to me, that a man is not saued for seeing, speaking and hearing, but for well performing that which he knoweth to be the best. Wordes are farther distant from deedes, the earth is remote from heauen. If any one would permitt you to goe into his vineyard there to gather grapes, would you content your selfe with leaues? It is a thousand times more necessary for a man to get instruction for himselfe, then for all the world. If you desire to know much, doe many good workes, and humble your selfe withall possibility. A Preacher should not speake ouer-curiously, nor too grossly: but should vse only common and ordinary termes.

Then the holy Father smilingly proceeded: there is great difference betweene the ewe that bleateth much, and her that bringeth many lambes: that is, it is not one thing to preach, and to putt in execution.

Br. Giles one day sayd to a Doctour, that seemed to glory much in his doctrine and preaching: if all the earth were in the possession of one man, and he should not labour it, what fruit would he reap therof? Rely not therfore so much on your learning, albeit all the knowledge of all the world were in your head, because not performing workes necessary to your saluation, it would nothing auayle you.

This holy Father prayed a Religious that went to preach att Perusia, to take for the theme of his sermon these wordes: I kisse, I kisse, I speake much and performe litle. This is in his life a litle before.

LUC. 22. This holy Father expounding these wordes of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST, *I haue prayed for thee Peter, I haue prayed for thee,* that thy faith faile not: and thou once couerted, confirme thy Brethren: he thus interpreted it: Almighty God, sayd he, would giue to vnderstand that a man should first labour for himselfe, and then for others. And albeit the conuersion of soules be very gratefull vnto God, yet it is vnderstood of those that can doe it without preiudice to the saluation of their owne soules, seruing God, as S. Paul, whersoever they are. Therefore this holy Father would often with great seruour of spirit, say: Paris, Paris, thou doest ruinate the Order of S. Francis. Which this good Religious sayd, seeing the disquiett and trouble of spirit of many learned Frere Minors, that put confidence in their sciences.

Br. Giles hearing a quail and a doue to sing, sayd in seruour of spirit: there is the way, there is the way, and not there: as if they sayd, lett vs endeavour to doe well in this life, and not expect the other: with reason sister doue thou speakest this, so sweetly groning. But sinner wheron thinkest thou? why makest? not thou thy profit of this aduertisement? Besides, it is to be vnderstood that Br. Giles speake this vpon the allusion of the Italian, and Spanish tongue, with the note of the doue and the

the quaille, which is, quaqu, which cannot be applied to the French tongue.

A discourse of good and euill wordes.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

HE that vttereth good wordes is as the mouth of God, & he that speaketh ill, litle differeth from the mouth of the deuill. When the seruantes of IESVS CHRIST asseble together in any place to discourse, they should talke of the excellency of vertues, that they may seeme pleasing vnto the, and giue them contentment, and should also be exercised in the. By which act they shall come to loue the more, and to performe better actions: for the more a man is burthened with vices, the more needfull it is for him to speake of vertues; because by the frequent and pious discourse of them, he perswadeth and easily disposeth himselfe to put them in practise. But what shall we say, the conditions of this world being so corrupted, that one cannot speake good of good, nor euill of euill? We will then confesse the truth, that we know not how to speake of good, how good it is, nor lykewise of euill how euill it is. Wherefore it seemeth that neither of these to thinges, can sufficiently be comprehended. So that I tell you, I esteeme it not a lesse vertue, to know how to be silent, then how two speake well: and according to my iudgement, a man should haue a long neck as a Crane, that his wordes passe by many ioynates, before it goe out of the mouth.

What ought to be ordinary discourse of the Religions.

Great vertue to know when to be silent.

Note this word.

A discourse of perseuerance in good worckes, and of the memorie of death.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

WHat doth it profit a man, to fast, pray giue almes, mortifie himselfe, and to haue vnderstanding of celestiall thinges, yet withall this doth not arriue to the desired port of saluation? There hath bin sometime seene in the mayne sea a faire shipp loaden with abondance of wealth, which neere vnto the hauen, surmounted by a litle tempest, hath miserably perished. What then hath auayled the brauery and riches that it brought? But on the contrary hath bin seene an old vessell, vnseemely and contemptible to each one, that hath defended it selfe from the perilles of the sea with her burden of merchandises, and securely arriued in the port, & such an one deserueth praise. The same happeneth also to men of this world, and therefore ought they to liue alwayes in the feare

feare of God. For although a tree grow and is fastened in the ground, he doth not yet sodenly become great, and when he is great, he doth not presently flourish, he is not so loone fruitfull, if he be, they be not ripe, if ripe, they do not in euery respect content the master. For some doe rott, other are beaten downe by the windes of temptations, and are deuoured by the wormes of the fences.

Two things I should for great benefittes of God, when a man hath his hart remote from sinne, and replenished with loue towards God: which two things whosoever shall possesse without danger of any euill, shalbe in possession of all good: But he must perseuer, because if one had from the beginning of the world to this instant, liued in distresses and afflictions, and now should haue abundant fruition of all kind of ioyes, all the miseries past would not offend him: on the contrary, if one had alwayes spent his time in continuall iolity and contentment, and were att this present oppressed with diuers miseries and infirmities, his pleasures past would nothing reioyce him. Wherefore each one should leuell att that, where althings are to end and determine.

A seculer person hauing told this holy Father, that he would be content to liue a long time in this world and to be rich and haue his pleasure in all things: he answered him: If you should liue a thousand yeares, and were lord of all the world, what recompence shoulde you receaue in the death of this body, which you shall with so great affection and pleasure, haue serued; but wormes, stinch, and eternall death? Better were it for you my child, beleue me, to endure a litle here, so to receaue in heauen that incomprehenfible recompence, which by no humane tongue can be expressed.

A discourse of Religion and Obedience.

THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

I Would more respect a litle grace from almighty God in Religion, then much more in the world: because there is more perill and lesse helpe in the seculer estate then in Religion, and yet a sinfull man hath more feare of his good then of his euill, because he feareth more to doe penance entring into Religion, then to persist in sinne in the world.

They that enter into Religion, and performe not what is conuenient to their vow, are like a common labourer that adorneth himselfe with the armour of a braue soldier and when he must fight, knoweth not how to vse it. I doe not esteeme it much to enter into the Court of a king, and to gett fauour of him; but I much esteeme, to know how to liue in a

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Court as one ought and so to perseuer: The Court of a great king, is Religion, wherein it is a small matter to enter and to receaue some gift of Almighty God: But to know how to liue there, and to perseuer in holy deuotion to the end, is a matter very laudable and estimable. Wherefore I had rather liue in secular estate, with desire to enter into Religio, then to be Religious with wearinesse and irksomnes. The glorious Virgin Mother of IESVS CHRIST was borne of a sinfull man & woman, and liued not inclosed in any Religion, neuertheles she was, & is as she is. But when a Religious hath made profelsion, he must beleue that he neither knoweth nor can liue out of Religion. It doth vndoubtedly seeme vnto me that the Religion of the Frere Minors was sent of God into the world, for a great benefit and profit to al men: but we shal proue extremely milerable, if we be not such as we ought to be. I esteeme the Religion of the Frere Minors, to be the poorest and the richest of the world: but we haue this defect, that we aspire to rise to high: when a shippe is broken by a tempest, though the affliction be great, he that can, striueth to saue himselfe. Considering all the Religions that are, and haue bin from the beginning of the world to this present, I find none so reasonable, conuenient, nor better then this of the Frere Minors. He is rich that playeth the part of a rich man, he is wise that imitateth the wise, he good that imitateth the good; and he noble that is a true follower of our most noble Lord IESVS.

Virtuous conditions open vs the way to all happines, and vicious to perdition. And therefore the more a Religious submitteth himselfe vnder the yoke of obedience, the more fruit doth he produce; and the more obedient a Religious is and more subiect to his Superiour, for the honour and loue of God, so much more is he poore of spirit and purged of his sinnes.

A Religious truly obedient is as a soldier well armed, and as a horseman mounted on a gallant Courser, who securely breaketh through the midst of his ennemies without detriment. The Religious that obeyeth with murmure is as a disarmed horseman on a cowardly iade, that passing through his ennemies, stumbleth, and is taken prisoner. The Religions that seeketh to liue according to his will, desireth to goe to the fire of hell. When the oxen submitt their neck to the yoke, then are the corne-loftes full with graine: but when they run wandering ouer the fieldes and taking their pleasure, it is a signe that the garners are empty. The more eminent and wise personnes yeld their head vnder the yoke of obedience: but the ill-aduised and ignorant, retire themselves and contemne to obey. The mother doth often bring vp her sonne and rayse him to honour, and the vngratefull sonne disobeyeth his mother and derideth her; Many Religious doe the like to Religion their mother

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Paradox
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ther. I more esteeme to obey a Superiour for the loue of God, then to obey God himselſe: for he that obeyeth the vicar of IESVS CHRIST, with greater reason would he obey God himselſe, if he command him.

He that submitteth his head vnder the yoke of obedience, and afterward remoueth it to follow of himselſe the way of perfection according to his fantasie, he discouereth his interiour pride. Wherefore it seemeth to me, if one had obtayned the grace to speake with the Angels, & were att the instant called by his superiour, he should incontinently leaue his conference with the Angels, and obey a man, to whome he hath voluntarily made himselſe subiect for the loue of God.

To leaue
God for
to goe to
God.

Our Lord and Redeemer IESVS CHRIST hath made the verity of this doctrine appeare in Br. Andrew, my deuout companion, who being in feruent prayer in his cell, his diuine Maiesty appeared vnto him in forme of a very beautifull child, who by the splendour of his countenance, and the familiarity which he shewed him, filled him with an ineffable consolation. But in the meane whiles it runge to Euen-song: the poore Religious then not knowing what to doe, resolved to leaue his God, and went incontinently to the quier, saying, that it was the better to obey the creature for the loue of the Creatour, in this maner giuing satisfaction to both the one and the other. The sequell discovered how pleasing this his opinion was vnto God: for the euensong being ended, Brother Andrew returned to his cell and there yet found the little child I E S V S, who sayd vnto him: If thou haddest not gone to the quier, I had presently gone hence, and neuer returned.

A discourse of vertues and vices in generall, and of Prayer.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

Diuine thinges make a man rich, and humane thinges make him poore. Wherefore men should follow and loue the one and the other. For as all the wayes of the earth are full of vices and finnes, so they of heauen are full of vertues, which being prepared for creatures, call to each one, saying: come and entertaine vs, and we will teach you the way of saluation, but man miserable as he is, hath no mind that way. Whose fault is it then if he liue in misery and pouerty, sith being called of God, he will not take the paines, to come to his presence? whereby he maketh himselſe guilty of eternall death. For as vertues and graces are the way and ladder leading to heauen: so finnes are the downfall descending into hell.

But

But it is very perillous to demaund of God vertues and graces, because, if hauing receaued them, we doe not good worckes accordingly, we make his diuine Maieſty more our ennemy, and prouoke his wrath to chaſtice vs for our ingratitude: in reſpect that by how much greater the gift is which God preſenteth to his creature, the more vngratefull doth he proue that conſerueth it not. The more a man is ſurmounted by vices and ſinnes, the more ought he to hate and abhorre them.

By prayer a man doth often meritt great graces and vertues, for he is thereby illuminated in his ſoule, and fortified in faith, he taketh notice of his miſery, obtayneth feare and humility, and purchaſeth a contempt of himſelfe: he getteth contrition for his ſinnes, the gift of teares, and amendment of his euill life. Prayer maketh the ſcience of a man pure, maketh him conſtant and ſtable in patience, and delighting in obedience, it maketh him perfect in mortification of himſelfe; it purchaſeth vnto him an aſſured knowledge, the gift of vnderſtanding, the gift of force, the gift of prudence, and finally conuolucth him to the knowledge of God, who manifeſteth himſelfe to them that adore him in ſpirit and truth: for a man by prayer is inflamed in loue, then preſently runneth after the diuine odour, and obteyneth the ſweetnes of delight, then is eleuated to reſpoſe of ſpirit, where he is admitted to the glory of the ſweetnes of God. When he ſhall haue layd his mouth to the word of the moſt high, wherewith alone the ſoule is ſatiſfied. Who can euer ſeparate him from prayer, which raiſeth and eleuath the ſpirit vnto contemplation?

IOAN. 4.

And that they, who ſhall deſire to obtaine the aforeſaid thinges, may know to attayne therto, lett them, among all other well obſerue theſe ſix conſiderations, as moſt neceſſary, wherof the firſt is touching his ſinnes paſt, for which he muſt haue contrition: the ſecond, to be prudent in his actions preſent: the third, to foreſee thoſe to come: the fourth, lett him conſider the mercy of God that expecteth mannes repentance, not taking vengeance on him, though he haue made himſelfe worthy of eternall tormentes, according to diuine iuſtice, which he deſembleth, in expectation of his amendement. The fifth is of the benefittes of his diuine Maieſty, which are innumerable, as the incarnation, and paſſion, and all for our benefit, the doctrine which he left vs, and the glory he promiſeth. And for the ſix and laſt, he muſt conſider what our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST hath loued in this life, as pouerty, nakednes, hunger, thirſt, cold, humility diſhonour, contempt, trauels, wherein we muſt endeavour to conſorme our ſelues, and to follow him with all poſſibility.

Of some other spirituall discourses of this glorious Sainct.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

*Notable
answered to a
curious
parson.*

THis holy Father was once demaunded by a seculer person, vpō what occasion man should be more enclined to euill then to good, he answered: It hath bin more apt to the earth, since the malediction therof, to produce ill weedes, then good hearbes. But a carefull and dilligent labourer, can by his industry to husband it, that those weedes shall not easily grow therein.

An other putting him a question of predestination, he answered: The water of the sea shoare is sufficient to wash my feet, yea my whole body; and I esteeme him a foole that this being able to content him, will cast himselfe into the mayne sea: for I beleeeue it sufficeth a Christian to know how to liue well, without search into matters so highe. Then he added: you must pray to God that he giue you not too much felicity in this world, but that he send you great combattes against your senses, and that therein he doe not assift you by the tast of his diuine sweetnesses and suauity, for your greater recompence, and his greater glory.

Hereby may be discerned whither a man loue God perfectly, if with an earnest care he endeauour to sequester himself from vices, seeking daily to augment in good worckes, because it is a greater vertue to follow grace, then patiently to support afflictions, for many haue patience, but follow not grace.

Frere Minor, is as much to say, as one vnder the feet of all men, and the greater the descent is, the greater also is the fall. We ought more to feare temporall felicity, then temporall euill; for the euill followeth man, and felicity is his contrary. We must so conuerse with men, as we loose not that which God woorketh in vs. But lett vs rather labour and trauell to saue our selues with litle, sith that it sometimes happeneth that a man being skilfull in swimming, and will imprudently seeke to helpe an other that is in perill of drowning in the water, they both are drowned, and so the losse is double.

A man shalbe obliged to yeld an account of the graces which he hath not: For as God createth a creature by his bounty and grace, he ought reciprocally appeare gracious and acknowledge the same; if not, lett him know that he hath lost grace by his owne negligence. For if he would trauell and labour in the grace receaued, he should obtaine many other graces of God, which through his owne fault, he hath not.

I desire, sayd this holy Father, first to obey euen to death; then
to

to be humble vnder the feet of each one : thirdly I desire rigorously to chastice and rent my flesh with my teeth , and so bind my neck with an iron chaine , as I would haue no power att my pleasure to gett loose.

How God wrought many miracles by the merittes of Brother Giles.

THE XLII. CHAPTER.

OVr Lord by a notable miracle declared how much was the merit of charity in his seruant Brother Giles , who meeting on the way to Alsifium a gentleman that was carryed to haue a foot cutt off, wherein there was a wound so eaten with a cancre, that if the foot were not cutt off, his life were in imminent danger : The gentleman knowing Brother Giles , weeping , made him a pittifull relation of the occasion of his iorney to Alsifium, then opened his legge , and shewed him the wound, and with great humility and deuotion prayed him to make the signe of the crosse theron : Br. Giles therby moued with pittie and compalsion, made the signe of the crosse on the wound, then with great deuotion kissed it, and the gentleman was a litle after entierly cured and retourned to his house a foot, praying and thanking God for such a grace, obtayned by the merit of his holy seruant.

*By the
signe of
the crosse
he cureth
one broken
foot.*

This good Father one time reprehended a Religious for a fault committed ; and he tooke this reprehension sinisterly and with litle patience , but the night following there appeared vnto him one that sayd: Brother henceforward receaue with patience and in good part the aduertisements and reprehensions which shalbe giuen you : for he that shall beleue and obey Br. Giles, shalbe happy. The Religious incontinently after this vision arose before it was day, and came to the holy Father, acknowledging his fault of impatience vsed vnto him, and most humbly besought him to correct him often, promising thenceforwaad to take whatsoeuer should come from him, not only with patience, but with great ioy.

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sions.*

A Religious that had neuer seene Br. Giles, but had heard such report of him , desired to see both him, and some of his actions . But being exceedingly grieved that the great distance betweene them , put him in dispaire of euer receiuing that happines, he one night saw in a vision a booke, wherein no other thing was written but these wordes : This is he that prayeth continually for all the people, and for the holy . Cittie ; which the sayd Religious vnderstood to be Brother Giles.

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vlt.*

A woman of the city of Perugia, having no milke wherewith to suck her litle child, had recourse to this holie Father, to whome she was much deuoted: but he being in extasie, she could not speake vnto him. And she not hauing leasure to expect, came neere him where he prayed, whose breast hauing with exceeding faith and deuotion, touched, she had milke sufficient to nource her child.

How God communicated to Br. Giles a most pleasing feeling of glory before this death.

THE XLIII. CHAPTER.

THis holy Father a litle before his death, retourning from prayer into his cell replenished with a merueillous ioy, sayd to his companion: My child, giue me thy iudgement in this: I haue found a treasure of such worth and excellency as no humane tongue can expresse; and therefore my child, I pray thee againe speake thine opinion therof. Which he diuers times repeated with an exceeding seruour of spiritt, and with such enflamed charity, that he seemed to be really druncken with the wine of the loue of God, and the abondance of his grace. But this Religious hauing told him that it was time to goe take his refection, he ioyfully answered him: My child, this is a singuler refection and farre better then any other. The Religious thincking to tempt him sayd: Father, lett vs not now thinck of these thinges, but lett vs to goe to dinner. Wherto the venerable Br. Giles replied that such speech was iniurious vnto him, and that he should haue done him greater pleasure to haue stricken and wounded him to the bloud. Now one may piously presume that this holy soule had notice that it should shortly leaue the flesh, to enioy that notable treasure of eternall glory which it so much desired, there to haue fruition and tast of the most sacred presence of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST. About that time a Religious told him, that the holy Father S. Francis had sayd, that the seruant of God should alwayes desire to end his life by martyrdom, wherto he answered. For my part I respect not to die better then in contemplation.

Of the

Of the admirable prophesie he made of himselfe, and of his death.

THE XLIV. CHAPTER.

Brother Giles, besides his age being wasted by grievous infirmities, as ache in his head and stomache, by a very troublesome cough, and burning ague, so that he could neither eat, sleep, nor repose: The Cittizens of Perugia out of great deuotion towards him, sent many armed men to guard him: that being dead, his body might not be buried other where: well knowing that he did not only desire, but would order to be buried att our Lady of Angels. Vnderstanding then that he was guarded with armed men, with great seruour of spirit he vttered these wordes: Brethren, tell the Perusians that the belles shal neuer ring for my canonization nor for any miracle of mine, and that they shall haue no other signe, but that of the Prophet Ionas. Which the Perusians vnderstanding, they answered they would haue him in their cittie, though he should not be canonized: and so the eue of saint George att the houre of Martins, as soone as the Religious had layed him on a bed to repose, hauing receaued the holy sacramentes ordayned by the Church, without any acke of his body, that might discouer and make appeare the agony of his death, only shutting his mouth and eyes, this contemplatiue soule was dissolued from the body, with great repose, God hauing for all eternity eleuated it vnto his glory. This holy Father departed this life the yeare of grace 1260. and of his conuersion to Religion 52. hauing merited to ascend vnto heauen ther to raigene eternally, the same day that he receaued the habitt of the holy Father saint Francis, becomming his true follower and disciple. The Perusians after death seeking stones to make him a tombe, found a sepulchre of marble, wherein was carued the history of the Prophet Ionas, where they layd his body, according as he had prophesied.

Of the reuelation of the glory of this S.

THE XLV. CHAPTER.

A Person of notable sanctity saw in vision the holy Br. Giles accompanied with a great number of soules of Religious & others that then were dead, and comming out of Purgatory they with him ascended into heauē. He saw our lord IESVS CHRIST with a great multitude of Angels that came to receaue him with musicke exquisitely

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melodious made by those Angelicall quiers: these blessed soules were with great honour entertayned of our Redeemer into his kingdome, were he seated them on a seat of merueillous glory. Att the same time that Br. Giles was sicke of his last sicknes, an other Religious fell also sick euen to death, who was instantly prayed by a third Religious his Friend, that if it should please God to call him, he would reueale vnto him his estate, if the diuine Maiefty would permitt it: which the sick Religious promised. Wherefore he dying the same day that Br. Giles did, appeared to this his Religious friend, and thus spake vnto him: Br. giue thanckes vnto God for that it hath pleased him to graunt and giue me his glory, deliuering me with many other soules from the paines of Purgatory by the merittes of Saint Giles. Which sayd he vanished. This Religious not daring to reueale this apparition to any, fell grievously sick: But conceauing that this sicknes might be sent him for not diuulging the glory of Br. Giles, he instantly called into his Couent some Frere Minors, to whome and to many other Religious he recounted the foresaid apparition, and was with all miraculoussly recouered.

*Notable
prerogatiues of
Br. Giles.*

S. Bonauenture said of this holy Br. Giles, that God had giuen him one speciall grace, which was, that whosoever did inuocate him in matters concerning the saluation of their soules, were heard. Our lord wrought many miracles after his death, by his merittes and intercession. He cured three personnes of infirmities in their eyes, five that were lame, and two of paine in their feet, that hindred them from mouing: three of the sqinancie, a woman in trauell of child; two of agues, one of the stone, and many of diuers other diseases.

*The end of the seauenth book, and second volume, of the first
part of the present Chronicles.*

T H E



THE EIGHTH BOOKE
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS,

WHEREIN IS DESCRIBED THE LIFE OF
the glorious Virgin S. Clare, the institution of her rule,
the conuersion of S. Agnes her sister, and of an other S.
Agnes, daughter to the king of Behomia.

Of the intention of our Lord in the vocation of S. Clare, and of her country, her father and mother. Of a reuelation vnto her mother touching her sanctity, and of her birth.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



IX yeares after the conuersion of the holy Father S. Francis, and the fourth yeare after the confirmation of his rule by Pope Innocent the third, the yeare of grace 1212. the omnipotent Father of light, hauing framed and sent into the world a new man, his seruant S. Francis, by him to reforme his faithfull in this sixt age, would also that a valerous woman should by his worck appeare in the world to accompany that his great seruant, to the end that of those two, should be new borne a perfect regeneration of the children of God. And as the first naturall generation came of man and woman, as of an vnited beginning: so this spirituall generatiō of the imitators of the life and counsailes of IESVS CHRIST, proceeded, in all the Church, and in all the estates and qualities of personnes, of one same spirit of zeale, of perfection, of humility, and of powerty, from one man and one woman. And to the end it might not be vnlike the creation, almighty God hauing first perfected his seruant

S. Francis, would frame of the ribbe or side of his life, doctrine and sanctity, the glorious Virgin S. Clare, his true and legitimate daughter in IESVS CHRIST for his companion, as zealous also of perfection and Angelicall reformation. With great reason therefore hath she her place in the Chronicles of the Freie Minors. For she being a ribbe and partye of the same Order, it is very requisite a special mention should be made of her sanctity of life, as we shall here performe. And if it be not according to her meritt, shall att least be done with the least defect we can possible, being resolved to employ therein that little force of spiritt which God hath giuen vs, and this to the honour of his diuine maiesty, of his holy seruant, and to the edification of soules.

The country of S. Clare.

The glorious saincte Clare was borne in the citty of Assisium, situated in the prouince of the Vally of Spoleum, which is a territory appertayning to the Romane Church. Her Father and Mother were noble, of a famous and very weathy family: her mother was called Hortolana (which in our tongue may be termed Gardener) and not without mystery, considering she was to produce so noble and vertuous a plant in the garden of the holy Church. This woman was exceeding deuout and compleare in the fruites of good worckes, and albeit she were maryed, and consequently obliged to the care and government of her houle and family, yet did she not omitt, with all her power to be exercised in the seruice of God, and employed in worckes of mercy. She was so feruent in the loue of IESVS CHRIST, that with great deuotion she passed the sea with many other Pilgrimes, and visited those holy places which our Redemer IESVS CHRIST God and man had consecrated with his holy presence, and returned exceedingly comforted and enriched with many merittes. She also visited the Church of Th'archangel S. Michael on the mount Gargan, and with a pious and feruent desire visited the Apostles S. Peter & S. Paule in Rome: in such sort did that vertue and seruour in those dayes shine in many holy personnes, but now so weakened is the seruour of Christians touching visiting holy places, and the reliques of our Lord and his SS. that it is almost lost, by the continuall warres of heretikes and of our sinnes. Now our lord began to poore out the abundance of his celestiall giftes on the root, that afterwards the sproutes of greater sanctity might follow and disperse into bowes. Neither would he that this deuout woman Hortolana should be deprived of the consolations and knowledge of this grace: for being neere her childbirth, she one day with great seruour prayed in a Church, and before a Crucifix, where she besought almighty God to deliuer her from the danger of death in her childbirth which she much apprehended; and she heard a voice that sayd: Woman, feare not, For thou shalt

The mother of S. Clare visited the holy land.

shalt safely and without danger bring forth a light that shall illuminate and lighten all the world. Being thus comforted and admonished by this diuine answere; so soone as she was deliuered of a daughter, she caused her to be called in Baptisme, Clare, firmly beleeuing that in her should be accomplished the splendour of the light promised, according to the prouidence and ordonnance of the diuine bounty.

Of the education, charity, prayer, mortification and virginity of sainte Clare.

THE II. CHAPTER.

Sainte Clare being borne into the world, she began incontinently to appeare and to shine as a morning starre in the obscure night of the world, for in the most tender yeares of her first infancie she already discovered euidēt signes of notable and pious worckes, wherein she made appeare her naturall worth, and the graces which God had communicated vnto her: for being naturally of a very delicate constitution, he receaued of her mother the first foundations of faith: afterwards being inspired of God, to apply her selfe to vertuous and pious worckes, she shewed her selfe to be a vessell aptly prepared for diuine grace: and as she abounded in interior piety, as wel by nature as by grace, towards poore beggers, so according to the small meanes which she had, she supplied their necessaries. And to the end her sacrifice might be more gratefull vnto God, the most delicate meates that were giuen her, for the nourishment of her litle body, she hid, and gaue it secretly to the poore. Thus did piety augment and encrease in her, and nourished charity in her soule, preparing her to receaue the grace and mercy of almighty God. Her greatest contentment was in prayer, whereby she was often sustayned, made ioyfull, and comforted as by an Angelicall milke, and in a most delicious manner eleuated to the diuine pleasures of the conuersation of our lord IESVS CHRIST. In these beginnings, hauing no beades, she vsed in steed thereof certaine litle stones, some to serue for the Pater noster, and others for the Aues, and so she offered her prayers to God. Wherevpon beginning to feele the first seruours of diuine loue, she iudged that she must contemne all transitory apparence and painted flowers of this world: and being by prayer well instructed of the holy Ghost, she resolved as a wise spirituall marchand to haue no more regard of terrestriall affaires, acknowledging them vnworthy to be esteemed: and with this Spirit she did weare as another sainte Cecilie, vnder her gay apparell, a hair-cloth, so exteriorly satisfying the world, and interiorly her Lord IESVS CHRIST.

*The first
beades of
s. Clare.*

But hauing attayned the age of mariage, she was importuned by her Father and other kinred, to chooſe a husband. Wherto ſhe would neuer conſent, but uſed lings and delayes, putting off and differring what ſhe could, all humane mariage, and euer recommended to our Lord IESVS CHRIST her virginity, with the other vertues wherewith ſhe was endued, by ſuch exerciſes endeauouring to pleaſe almighty God, that he might beſtow on her his only Sonne for her Spouſe. Such were the firſt fruites of her ſpiritt, and ſuch the exerciſes of her piety, ſo that being anoynted with ſuch a ſweet and ſpirituall oyntment, ſhe yelded a moſt pleaſing ſauour, as ſhoppe replenished with moſt delightfull liquors, whoſe ſauours though they be ſhut vp, diſcouer and manifeſt themſelues. In ſuch ſort that this holy virgin began, without her knowledge to be commended by her neighbours, the true fame of her ſecrett pious worckes ſo publiſhing themſelues, that in an inſtant they were exceedingly ſpred abroad, and euery where diuulged.

*How the virgin S. Clare had knowledge of the vertues of the holy
Father S. Francis.*

THE III. CHAPTER.

THis vertuous virgin Clare hearing the great fame of the admirable life of S. Francis, that then renewed vnto the world the way of perfection in the ſame city, with a merueillous example of piety and vertue, and conſidering that many gentlemen did follow him, and that his life was already approued by our holy mother the Church, ſhe exceedingly deſired to ſee and heare this worthy ſeruant of God, therunto inſpired by the ſoueraigne Father of ſpirittes, to whome had already bin preſented the firſt fruites of their deuotions, though differently. S. Francis hauing bin aduertised of this her deſire, and hauing heard the bruit of her vertues and holy affections, deſired alſo exceedingly to ſee her, and to conſerre with her, with intention to fruſtrate the world of ſo noble and precious a pray, to preſent her vnto our ſoueraigne Redeemer, to ſerue him in ſome notable enterpriſe, as preordayned of God to deſpoyle the great prince of the world. Neither did his diuine Maieſty faile, to open vnto them the meanes: and to attaine therunto, he inſpired this vertuous woman to relye on a very honorable graue woman, that governed her in her houſe as her mother. And to the end this holy purpoſe might be finiſterly enterpreted of men, and to hinder publicke murmure, ſhe went out of her Fathers houſe with this good woman, and found out the holy Father, by the ſerour
of

of whose pious discourses, she was presently enflamed with diuine loue, and moued by his holy actions which she admired, as seeming vnto her more then humane. And therfore she began very exquisitely to dispose her selfe to the effecting of the wordes of the holy seruant of God, who hauing very louingly entertayned her, began to preach vnto her the contempt of the world, and by euident reasons to demonstrate vnto her, that all the beauty of thinges present is but a vanity, filled with fallie and deceit full hopes. Then he perswaded vnto her pure cares, the honourable and amiable espousale of IESVS CHRIST, and counsayled her to conserue that most precious pearles of virginall purity, for that glorious Spouse, who out of loue he bare to the world being God became man and would be borne of a virgin. This holy Father sollicitated this affaire and playd the procuratour as a Paranimph and Embassadour of the heauenly king. The holy virgin on her side beginning already to tast the sweetnes of contemplation, and the prooffe of the eternal ioyes, the world began to seeme vnto her vile and contemptible as indeed it is, she as it were melting for the loue of her celestiall Spouse, whome she already desired with all her hart. Thencefoorth therfore she desprised precious stones, iewels, gold, sumptuous apparell, and all other worldly trash as filth and donge, and abhorring the detestable delightes of the flesh, she resolued intierly to dedicate her selfe a liuely temple to IESVS CHRIST, and to take him for the only Spouse of her body and soule: and so submitting her selfe totally to the counsailes of the glorious Father S. Francis, him, next after our Lord, she tooke for guid and directour of her life.

How S. Francis drew the virgin S. Clare out of the world, and made her Religious.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

ANd to the end the most cleare Mirrour of her soule might not be stayned and blemished with the dust of this world, and that the contagious seculer life did not corrupt her innocencie, the holy Father prudently endeauoured to sequester this virgin from worldly people. And the solemnity of palme-sunday approching, the holy espouse of IESVS CHRIST, wit a great seruour of spiritt repayred to this man of God, and most instantly demaunded of him, when, and how she should make her retyre from the world. Whervpon the holy Father S. Francis ordayned, that one the day of the sayd feast she should goe to the procesion of palmes with the people, decked and adorned the most richly and gorgiously that she could procure, and the night

following going out of the citty and withall out of all conuerſation of the world, ſhe ſhould change ſeculer pleaſures into lamentations of the paſſion of our Lord.

Palme-ſunday being come, the glorious S. Clare went in the cōpany of her mother and other ladies to the great Church, where there happened a matter worthy to be recorded, as not done without the prouidence of the diuine goodnes. Which was, that all the other ladies going, as is the cuſtome of Italie, to take holy palme, and S. Clare, out of a virginall baſhfulnes, remainyng alone without mouing out of her place, the Biſhop deſcended the ſteppes of his ſeat, and putt into her hand a branch of palme.

The night approaching ſhe began to prepare her ſelfe for effecting the commandement of the holy Father, and to make a glorious flight and honorable retyre frō the world, in honeſt company. But it ſeeming to to her impoſſible to goe ſoorth att the ordinary and chieffeſt dore of the houſe, ſhe bethought her ſelfe to take the benefit of a back dore, which (though it were damned vp with groſſe ſtones and mighty blockes) ſhe with an admirable courage, & a force rather of a ſtrong man then a tēder yong woman, her ſelfe brake open. Thus then leauing her fathers houſe, her citty, kinred and friendes, ſhe with extraordinary ſpeed arriued att the Church of our lady of Angels, where the Religious that in the houſe of God, were employed in pious watchinges, receaued with burning wax lightes in their handes, this holy virgin, that ſought her Spouſe and Redeemer I E S V S C H R I S T with a lampe not extinct and empty, but filled with diuine loue. And incontinently in the ſelfe ſame hour and place, hauing left and abandonned the immondicities of Babilō, ſhe gaue the world the ticket of deſiance and repudiation before the altar of the ſoueraine Queene of Angels, where the glorious Father ſainct Francis, inſpired of God, and neglecting all other worldly reſpect, cutt off her haire: then he clothed her with a poore habitt of the Order, reiecting the iewels and gorgious attire which ſhe brought, to be giuen to the poore of I E S V S C H R I S T. It had not bin indeed conuenient that the new Order of flouriſhing virginity towards the end of the world, ſhould otherwhere begin then in the Angelicall Pallace of that moſt eminent lady, who before had alone bin a mother and Virgin, and conſequently more worthy then all others. In the very ſame place had the noble cheualrie of the poore of I E S V S C H R I S T, the Friere Minors, their beginning vnder the valerous Captaine ſainct Francis: to the end it might euidently appeare that the mother of God in this her habitation ingendred and produced the one and the other Religion. And ſo, as this new eſpouſe had raceaued the habitt and enſignes of holy penitence before the altar of the moſt ſacred virgin Mary, the

humble seruante was accepted by IESVS CHRIST for his espouse, and the glorious Father saint Francis conducted her to the Monastery of saint Paul in Alsifum, where were Religious women of the Order of S. Bennet, there to remayne till almighty God prouided an other Monastery.

*How much the kinred of S. Clare laboured to retire her from Religion,
and how she was conducted to S. Damian.*

THE V. CHAPTER.

THe kinred of this holy virgin vnderstanding what she had done, and the bruit of her resolution being diuulged ouer all the city, many of the kinred and friendes of her Father and mother assembled and consulted, to preuent this vertuous virgin of her holy resolution: and comming to the monastery of the Religious of saint Bennet, whither she was retyred, they purposed to execute by violence what they could not compasse by humane reasons, trying their forces against that meeke lambe of IESVS CHRIST, and by their malice and peruerse counsaile, seeking to delude that simple doue: then did they make her deceitfull promises, exhorting her to retire her selfe from such base condition and abiection, demonstrating vnto her that it was a matter vnworthy her noble discent, and that neuer the like happened in the city. But the virgin firme and stable in IESVS CHRIST, approaching to the Altar, discouered her hairelesse head, alleading that she could no more be separated from the seruice of IESVS CHRIST, for whose loue she had already forsaken all the world and themselues also; and the more they tormented her, the more was her hart enflamed in the loue of IESVS CHRIST, he supplying her with new forces to resist. Thus for many dayes together disturbed with many iniuries, she endured great contradictions in the way of God: and albeit her kinred perseuered in their attempts to withdraw her from her pious designe, her seruour yett did neuer wax cold, nor her hart feeble: but on the contrary, so many iniurious wordes and violent threatens did so confirme her confidence in God, that her kinred were constrayned to forbeare any more to vex and disquiett her, retyring themselues as all aghamed and confounded. Thus did almighty God make appeare, how much the power of those that are his, though of themselues feeble, did exceed the strong and puissant of the world.

But in regard that her soule had not perfect repose in that place, she was by the holy Father saint Francis placed in the Church of saint Da-

Damian, & there as in a secure harbour, she cast the anchor of her soule, without euer chaunging place, neither in respect of the great restraint therof, nor for feare of solitude, this church being without the city. This was the Church in reparation wherof the glorious Father S. Francis laboured in the beginning of his conuersion: and where also he offered mony to the Chappelaine to repaire it: this holy Father being also in this church and praying with abondance of teares, merited to heare the voice of the crucifix, before which he was, that thrise reiterated vnto him: Goe Francis and repaire my house, which as thou seest is ready to fall. The glorious virgin Clare for the loue of her heavenly Spouse, shutt her selfe vp in that litle place, and there imprisonned her selfe, during her life sequestering her body from the turbulent tempest of the world. This siluered doue there building her nest in the concealities of that church, engendred the colledge of Virgins of our Lord I E S V S CHRIST, there instituted a holy Couent, and gaue a beginning to the Order of poore Religious women, and thus being settled in the way of penance, she battered the hard turfes of her members with the coulter of the crosse, and perfectly sowed the seed of sanctity and iustice, making with her very soule steppes and traces of vertuouse progresse for the that were to follow her.

How the Virgin Agnes, sister to S. Clare, was by her seruent prayes conuerted, and of the persecutions she endured by her kintred, and how she was miraculously freed of them.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Saincte Clare had a yonger sister, who both in regard of bloud and of pouerty was really her sister, she exceedingly desiring the conuersion of this yong virgin, neuer failed in her most seruent deuotions, which in her first dayes she offered to almighty God, the most deuoutly she possibly could with a perfect affection, to beseech him, that as she had liued with her sister in the world, there might be also betweene them a vnion of body and will in his seruice, most instantly importuning him to make appeare to her sister whome she had lef in her mothers house, what a notorious deluder the world is, and how full of discontentment: and on the contrary how sweet and contentfull is IESVS CHRIST, and that consequently he would please to change her desired resolution of carnall marriage, and cause her to embrace the vniō of diuine loue, and to take for Spouse the king of glory. Now in regard that our lord had already settled such an amity betweene these twoo sisters, that their separation was afflictive and troublesome vnto them

them (though then their desires and willes were farre different) he made no delay to fauour this his deuout suppliant, euen in this first petition, which she so instantly required of him, and which his diuine Maiefty so readily granted. Sixteene dayes then after her conuersion, her sister Agnes inspired of God, with a strong and prompt resolution gaue a slipp and farwell to the wold, and came to her sister Clare, to whome discovering the secrett of her hart, she sayd, she was resolved to serue God in her company. Which the glorious Clare vnderstanding, she most amia- bly embraced her, and with a very ioyfull and contented countenance layd: My most deere sister, I giue infinite thanckes to our lord IESVS CHRIST, that it hath pleased him to heare me, and deliuer me from the affliction I endured for your sake. This noble conuersion of Agnes by the prayers of her Sister Clare, was seconded by as many contradictions of her kinred: for these blessed sisters seruing our lord IESVS CHRIST and imitating his steppes, she that had most tast of God and was in higher progresse, instructing her sister Nouice: their kinred knowing that Agnes was with her sister Clare, twelue men of their neereft blood, as Brothers, Vncles, and Cosen germanes, assembled to assault them and to combat the espouses IESVS CHRIST. The day following then, with an extreme rage and fury they came to these holy virgins, yett att their first comming, dissembling their lewd intension, they shewed them some fauourable countenance: then addresing them selues to the virgin Agnes, despairing of all opinion to withdraw S. Clare from her holy purpose, they demaunded of her wherfore she was retyred into that place; then willed her to deliberate and resolue to retourne with them to her fathers house. Wherto she answered, that she was resolved, the grace of God assisting her, to remayne with her sister: which answere one among them disdayning, full of pafsion and transported with choler, tooke her by the haire, and gaue her many blowes with his feet and fistes, then vsed all his force to pull her out of the place, which att leight by the helpe of the others he performed: for taking her in their armes, they forcibly trayled her out. But this litle daughter of IESVS CHRIST, seeing her selfe violently wrested by those furious lions out of the armes of her God, she began to cry to her sister, help me sister, and permitt me not to be separated from our Lord IESVS CHRIST and your louing company. Her carnall kinred trayned along the vally this virgin of IESVS CHRIST against her will, and in despight of her feeble, though couragious resistance, renting her cloathes from her tender body. In meane while sainte Clare vnable by other meanes to relieue her sister, had recourse to prayer, with abondance of teares beseeching God to voutsafe to giue a couragious confidence to her sister, that his diuine fauour defending

his faithfull seruant, humane forces might be ouercome, and our lord heard her: for att the instant of her prayer, the body of the virgin Agnes, miraculously became so weighty, that her kinred were att lenght enforced to leaue her on the ground. And albeit so many men and their seruantes putt all their forces to lift her vp, yet could they neuer doe it, but called labourers & worckmen of the vineyards that wrought therabout to afsist them, yet their great number no more auayled then the lesser. Finally the forces failing of her kinred and those that attempted to afsist them: they acknowledged the miracle, though scornefully, saying: It is no meruaile that she is so weighty she hauing bin all night, as lead, whervpon Signeur Monalde her vnckle in extreme palsion, lifting vp his arme to strike her he presently felt an extreme paine therein, which did not only torment him for the present, but a long time after. Hereupon S. Clare (after her prayer) arriuing, belought her kinred to forbear in vaine to contend with God, and to leaue vnto her the care of her sister, who lay as halfe dead. They perceauing that they would neuer stagger in their pious resolution, being exceedingly wearyed, left the two sisters together. This troupe then being departed, the tormented Agnes arose from the ground full of ioy in IESVS CHRIST, for whole loue she had fought and ouercome in this her first conflict, against the world and his Prince the deuill, by fauour and assistance of diuine grace; and her sister asking her how she felt herselfe, she answered, that notwithstanding all the affliction they had procured her, by buffertes, beatings, spurnes with their feet and fistes, tearing by the haire, trayning her through stony wayes, she had felt in manner nothing, especially by the vertue and force of diuine grace, and next by the merittes of her good prayers. Shortly after the holy Father saint Francis cutt off her haire, leauing her stil hir proper name, Agnes, in memory of the innocent lambe IESVS CHRIST, who offering himselfe in sacrifice to his Father, gaue resistance to the world, fought valerously and ouercame. And so the holy Father instructed her with her sister, and taught her the way of God, in such sort that she so encreased and proffited in Religion, in vertue and sanctiry, that she was an admiration to all the world.

*Of the humility of the virgin sainte
Clare.*

THE VII. CHAPTER.

Profound humility was the first assured stone and foundation which the holy Virgin layd in the beginning of her Religion, after she had

had began to labour in the way of God, so to aduance and sett forward the building of all other vertues. She vowed obedience vnto sainct Francis, which vow in all her life she neuer transgressed; and for three yeares after her conuersion she desired rather, with great humility to be subiect, then a superiour shunning the title and office of Abbesse, taking more content to serue among the seruantes of IESVS CHRIST, them to be serued. But being att lenght by the holy Father sainct Francis therunto constrained, she vndertooke the gouernement of the Religious, which bred in her hart more feare then presumption, so that she rather continued and became a seruant, then free from subiection. For the more she seemed to be rayled to the office and title of digniry, the more did she repute and esteeme her selfe vile, and the more shewed her selfe ready to serue, and made her selfe more contemptible then all her Religious, both in habitt and base seruice. She disdained not to doe the office of seruantes, giuing water to the Religious to wash, whome she made often to sitt, her selfe standing and seruing them att table. When she commanded any thing, it was vnwillingly, rather desiring to doe, then to command others. She performed to the sicke all kind of seruices, were they neuer so loathsome, as to make cleane the immondicities and filthines, shunning with so worthy a spirit, the loathsome actions, nor abhorring or disdaining the most offensive sauours. She often washed the feet of the lay sisters, when they came from abroad, made them cleane, and with great humility kissed them. It one time chaunced, that washing the feet of a seruant, and offering to kisse them, the seruant vnwilling to permitt such humility, pulled away her foot to auoyd it, but she did it so rudely, that she gaue the holy virgin a dash on the face. Yet so farre was this Sainct from being offended therewith, that on the contrary she mildly tooke the foot of the seruant againe, and kissed the sole therof. Thus did this true epouse of God accomplish the doctrine of IESVS CHRIST, and 104. the example which he left when he washed the feet of his Apostles.

Of the voluntary pouerty of the Virgin sainte Clare, and of her zeale to that holy vertue.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THis holy virgin made a vnion and correspondence betweene her pouertye in all externall thinges and her holy pouerty of spirit, and

*He is too
conuerſion
Whome
God doth
not ſuf-
fice.*

and firſt att the beginning of her conuerſion ſhe made ſale of her patri-
mony and birth right, al which diſtributing vnto the poore of I E S V S
C H R I S T, ſhe reſerued nothing to her ſelfe. Hauing ſo abandoned all
the world exteriorly, and enriched her ſoule interiorly, freed of the
burden of worldly affaires, ſhe ran farre more lightly after I E S V S
C H R I S T, and therby contracted ſuch an inuiolable amity with holy
pouerty, that ſhe would haue poſſeſſion of no other thing then the glo-
rious I E S V S C H R I S T, nor would ſhe permitt her ſpirituell daughters
to poſſeſſe any thing elſe. And with this Euangelicall trafique, ſhe pur-
chaced the moſt precious pearle of celeftiall deſire, in place of all the
other things which ſhe had ſold, acknowledging that the ſame could
in no ſort be enioyed together with the diſtraction and occupation of
temporall things. Giuing inſtructions to her Religious, ſhe would ſom-
times ſay vnto them, that this their company ſhould be then gratefull
to God, ſhould become very rich in pouerty, and ſhould by ſuch meane
conſerue it ſelfe firme and ſtable, if it were alwayes fortified and enui-
roned withe the rampiers and ſtrong bulwarkes of pouerty. She alſo
admoniſhed her beloued daughters in our Lord I E S V S C H R I S T,
to conſorme themſelues to him lying poore in the bed of pouerty, who
was no ſooner borne, but was by the moſt ſacred virgin his mother layd
in the narrow cribbe.

Now deſiring to entitle her rule by the title of pouerty, ſhe demaun-
ded of Pope Innocent the fourth the priuiledge of pouerty, who as a
Magnanimous Prelat reioycing att the great ſeruour of this holy virgin,
exceedingly commended this her deuotion, aſſuring himſelfe that the
like priuiledge had neuer bin demaunded of the Apoſtolike ſea. And to
the end a new and extraordinary fauour might anſweare this new and
vnaccuſtomed demaund, the holy Pope with an exceeding contentment
wrote with his owne hand the firſt pattent of the priuiledge. Which
Pope Gregory the ninth his predeceſſour, of holy memory, had alſo
done, who with a Fatherly affection louing this eſpoule of I E S V S
C H R I S T, once gaue her counſaile, in conſideration of the diuerſe al-
terations of matters, and the ſtrange euent of times, yea and in regard of
the perills of future ages, to be content that her Order might haue ſome
poſſeſſions, himſelfe offering to beſtow it on them: but ſhe coura-
geouſly withſtood it, and as a true, poore, and legitimate daughter
of the Patriarch poore S. Francis, would neuer accord therunto.
The Pope alleadging that if ſhe feared the breach of her vow, he would
abſolue her therof. This Virgin very humbly anſwared him in theſe
tearmes: Holy Father, I ſhalbe very ioyfull if it pleaſe your holineſſe to
abſolue me of all my ſinnes. But to free me from performing the
Counſailes of God, I will accept no abſolution. This holy virgin
with

with an exceeding ioy receaued the morcels of bread which the Religious brought from begging, and had gotten for the loue of God: But she was much troubled when she saw whole loaues. She laboured much to conformance her selfe in all conditions of perfections of perfect pouerty with him that was poorely crucified: And in such sort that no transitory thing might separate the most poore virgin from her beloved, nor hinder her from her most ardent seruour to follow our Lord IESVS CHRIST.

Of the miracles of the pouerty of the glorious S. Clare.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

IT happened one day that the glorious virgin S. Clare knew that there was but one only loafe of bread in her Couent, and so the *With a little loafe she fed two families.* houre of dinner being come, she called the despensier, and willed her to cutt the loafe she had in her custodie in two, and to send the one halfe to the Religious that were without, and to keepe the other for themselues, wherof she should make fifty portions, there being so many Religious, and then should sett it on the table of pouerty. Whereto the despesier answered that the miracles of IESVS CHRIST were needful to make so many portions of so small quantity of bread. But S. Clare replied: Daughter doe only what I command thee: the Religious went presently to effect the commandement of her Abbesse: who in the meane while, together with all the Religious applied themselves to prayer, presenting their deuotions and reares to their Spouse IESVS CHRIST, and instantly by his bounty the litle the morcles of bread so augmented in the handes of the despensier that cutt it, that they sufficed to feed all the Religious.

It happened an other time that the seruantes of IESVS CHRIST wanted oyle, so that they had not sufficient to dresse meat for the sick: S. Clare being aduertised of this necessity, tooke a pott, which as mistres of humility she washed with her owne handes, then sent it to the turne wheele, that a Religious man there might take it to goe demaund oyle for the loue of God. Hauing to this effect caused to be called a Religious mā to send him (as matters doe not succeed as men propose, but according to the pleasure of the diuine and mercifull prouidence) S. Clare hauing recommended this necessity to almighty God, the said Religious found the pott full of pure oyle; which perceiving, he thought the Religious within had required it without need; and with a kind of murmure he said: I know not why the sisters haue called me, their pott being full of oyle: So the miracle was discovered,

couered . Almighty God did,often also by extraordinary meanes supply the necessities of his poore seruantes , by the meritorious prayers of sainte Clare.

Of the austere mortifications, abstinences and fast of S. Clare.

THE X. CHAPTER.

I Doubt whither it be not more expediēt to conceale, then to diuulge the admirable affliction and rude penance of sainte Clare, because this holy virgin hath performed such extreme mortifications, that many who shall read them acknowledging themselves cowardes & ouercome in this conflict, (as al we are) and putt into admiration att these merueilous actes, will perhappes call in question her prowesses, which is to oppugne the very truth. Is it not a great matter that vsing one only habitt all patched, and a poore cloake of the grossest cloth, she rather couered her body then defended it from the importunities of the seasons? But it is more admirable that she neuer woare stockings, shooes, nor other thing on her feet, after she became Religious. It was also a strange matter, that she fasted dayly and neuer failed for whatsoeuer occasion that happened. She neuer lay on mattresse, though that were no singuler prayse vnto her, all her Religious doinge the like. This espouse of I E S V S C H R I S T woare more then the rest a hairecloth as great as halfe a tunicle, made of hogges haire, the haire next her flesh being halfe shorne: She also woare a haire cloth, which a Religious very importunately once borrowed of her: but prouing it to be so rude and sharpe, she restored it to sainte Clare three dayes after, more readily then she had ioyfully borrowed it. Her ordinary bed was the bare ground, except sometimes she slept on dry branches or twigges, vsing for a pillow a block of wood. But in regard that the rigorous life wherewith she so afflicted her body brought her to sicknesse, the holy Father saint Francis commanded her to lye on chaffe. The rigour of her abstinence in her fastes was such, that she could not maintaine her body in life, so litle did she eat, but that it is easy to iudge she was sustayned by diuine vertue. When she had her health, she fasted all the Aduent and Lent; and from Allsaintes to Christmas with bread and water the sondayes excepted: and which is more admirable, three dayes of the weeke, monday, wednesday and friday of the lent, she did eat nothing at all: so that the commandement of fast, and the rigour of her voluntarie mortification seemed to haue a contrariety each with other, because the eue of a perfect or commanded fast, she vied but bread and water. Neither must it be admired if such a rigour of so long continuance, bred many infir-

infirmities in this holy virgin, which wasted her forces, and ouerthrew all her naturall strenght and health of body. The deuout Religious daughters of this holy mother, had exceeding compalsion of her, and very bitterly lamented her voluntarily procuring her owne death. For remedy wherof, saint Francis and the bishop of Alsium forbad her those three dayes of fast, which euery weeke she cruelly inflicted on her selfe, and commanded her not to passe one day without taking att least an ownc and a halfe of bread to conserue her life. And albeitt such grieuous affliction of the body doe accustom to breed also some affliction to the heart, yet did the contrary succed in her; for she carryed a countenance so gracious and ioyfull in all her austerities, that she seemed, either to haue no feeling of them, or not to feare any inconuenience therof; Yea, she in a sort scoffed att corporall afflictions; which sufficiently demonstrated that the spirituall ioy wherwith she was interiourly nourished, appeared exteriourly in her holy face, because the true loue of the hart, alwayes maketh corporall afflictions easy and light.

*Of the deuotion and spirituall profit Which the same of the glorious
S. Clare procured ouer all the world.*

THE XI. CHAPTER.

THe fame of sainte Clare began within litle time to spread ouer all Italy, which caused women from all partes to begin to runne after the odour of the precious liquour of her sanctity. The virgins after her example approached vnto IESVS CHRIST and made him presentes of their virginity. Married women endeauoured to liue more chaste and vertuously: Gentlewomen and Ladyes contemning their faire houses and sumptuous tables, shutt themselues into Monasteries, esteeming it a great glory to liue in strict penance for the loue of IESVS CHRIST. This Saint was also a spurre vnto men, to excite in them a violent seruour, and principally to youth, that began to take courage in the contempt of the world, and by example of the frayler sexe, to fight against the temptations and deceitfull pleasures of the flesh; Many married personnes with mutuall consent obliged themselves to continencie, the men entring into Couentes of men, and the women into monasteries of Religious women. The mother induced the daughter to serue IESVS CHRIST, the daughter the mother, one sister an other, and briefly each one by
a holy

a holy enuie desired to serue I E S V S CHRIST, all seeking to participate of the euangelicall life which by this espouse of I E S V S CHRIST, was demonstrated vnto them. An infinite number of virgins that by her fame were induced to piety, vnable to become Religious, or to leaue their Fathers houses, endeauoured yet to liue therein religiously, leading a reguler life without rule. S. Clare by her example produced such branches of saluation, that it seemed the laying of the Prophett was to be accomplished in her: The fruites of the deloliate and barren, are far greater then of the married. Whiles these matters thus proceeded in Italy, the discent of this benediction, which destilled downe in the vally of Spoletum, grew, by diuine providence to so spacious and lardge a floud, that the violent current therof ouer flowed all the citties of the holy Church, so that the nouelty of such admirable things, was speedily diuulged ouer all the world, and with such praise and admiration gaue such lustre, that the nature of her vertues filled with splendour the chambers of great ladyes, and penetrated even into the great pallaces of Duchesses, yea those most pure beames of her brightnes pearced into the very cabbinettes of Queenes and Princesses, in such sort that eminencie of bloud and hight of nobility submitted & debased it selfe to follow the steppes of this glorious Virgin, many reiecting the beames of their honour, and the sublimity of their estates, so that some ladyes that could haue bin marryed to kinges and dukes, induced by the fame of saincte Clare, tooke vpon them the practise of strict pennance: and many already marryed to men of great nobility, desired in their estate to imitate this seruant of I E S V S CHRIST. An infinite number also of citties were in this example adorned with Monasteries of yong women: The fieldes, and mountaines were ennobled and enriched with the structures of these celestially buildings. The exercise and honour of chastity did multiply in the world, saincte Clare carrying the stander of the Order of Virgins, which being almost extinguished, she restored to perfection reneweing it by the blessed flowers of her example and conuersion. But retourning to the history, lett vs speake of the perfection of the prayer of this glorious Virgin, by meane wherof she obtayned of God so great graces for her selfe and her daughters.

Of the seruent and perfect prayer of the Virgin, S. Clare.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

AS saincte Clare was mortified in her flesh, and far remote from all corporall recreation, so did she continually busye her soule in deuotions

otions and diuine prayſes. This virgin had fixed and imprinted the ſubtilty of her ſeruent deſire in the eternal light: & as ſhe was remote from earthly occupations and rumors, ſo did ſhe the more largely dilate the boſome of her ſoule to the influence of diuine grace. She continued in long prayer together with her Religious after compline, the riuers of teares that flowed from her eyes awakening and bathing the hartes of her companions: When the ſleep of others gaue her opportunity to be ſolitary, being often in prayer, ſhe would lay her face againſt the earth bathed with teares, kiſſing it ſweetly and with ſuch contentment, that ſhe ſeemed alwayes to hold in her armes her Spouſe IESVS CHRIST, att whoſe feete her teares trickled downe, and her kiſſes left their impreſſions.

It happened one time, that as this holy virgin powered out her teares in the ſilent of the night, the Angel of darcknes appeared vnto her in figure of a black yong man, ſaying: If thou continuelt this extreme weeping thou wilt become blind. Wherto ſhe answered: He that is to ſee God, cannot be blinde. Wherwith the deuill being confounded vaniſhed and fled. The ſame night this S. being in prayer, after matines, all bathed in teares, the temptor appeared againe vnto her and ſayd: Weep not ſo much, vnleſſe thou wilt haue thy braine to melt and diſtill, in ſuch ſort as thou ſhalt auoyd it att thy eyes and noſtrels, and therwith ſhalt haue thy noſe crooked. S. Clare with great ſeruour answered him: He that ſerueth IESVS CHRIST can haue no crookedneſſe, and preſently the wicked ſpirit diſappeared. Many ſignes did diſcouer & make knowne the great alteration ſhe receaued in her ſelfe, in the ſeruour of her prayer, and how ſweet and delectable the diuine bounty was vnto her in this ioy and holy conuerſation: for when ſhe returned from prayer, ſhe with admirable contentment, brought wordes enflamed with the fire of the altare of God, which kindled the hartes of her Religious, and procured in them a great admiration att this extreme ſweetnes that appeared and ſaſhed out of her face. It is without doubt, that almighty God had coupled and conioyned his ſweetnes with her pouerty, and did maniſeſt exteriorly in her body, that her ſoule was interiorly replenished with diuine light. In this manner did ſhe ordinarily liue full of ſo ſupreme delightes, paſſing ouer this deceitfull world with her noble Spouſe IESVS CHRIST, and being on this wheele of motion, ſhe was theron ſuſtained with an aſſurance and firmity of vertue, very ſtable, and preſerued with the ceſtiall eleuation of her ſoule, in the hight of heauen, keeping the treaſure of glory ſecurely ſhutt vp, with in a veſſell of fleſh, here below on earth. This holy virgin accuſtomed to call vp the yonger Religious a litle before matines, and to awaken them with the ordinary ſigne, to excite them very often to praife

God . All her Religious sleeping, she did watch, lighted the lampe, & rung att mattines, so that negligence found no entrance into her monastery : noursloath had there any place . She also, by the sting of sharpe reprehension, and of her liuely and effectuall examples, expelled teperity and itckfomnes in prayer and the seruice of God.

How the Mores Were expelled the Monastery, by the prayers of S. Clare.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

THis being the place where we should record the miracles of this holy virgin, it is not conuenient that we pretermitt them in silence: for as the merueillous effectes of her prayer are veritable, so also are they worthy of honour and reuerence . In the time of the Emperour Federick the second, the holy Church in diuers places endured great persecutions, but particularly in the vally of Spoletum, which being subiect to the Romane Church, dranck of the vessell of wrath of this mischieuous tyrant, his capitaines and soldiers being scattered ouer the feldes as grasse-hoppers, with sword to murder people, and with fire to burne their houses . The impiety of this Emperour did so augment, that he had assembled all the Mores that dwelt on the mountaines and among the desertes, to make himselfe the more fearefull vnto his vassels : and after he had by lardge promises gayned these Mores, and disposed them into diuers places, he gaue them att length for retyre a very ancient but ruined citiy, which yet to this present is called, Mourades Mores, which they fortified, and then thither retyred about twenty thousand fighting men, who did much mischeife ouer all Apulia, and in other Christian places . These ennemies of the faith of I E S V S CHRIST came one day vnexpectedly towards the citye of Afsium, who being already close to the portes, a great number of them came to the Monastery of saint Damian, as a lewd and disloyall nation that continually thirsted after the bloud of Christians, and dareth to committ indifferently all kind of execrable actes, without either shame of men, or feare of God . These Mores then brake euen into the Monastery of sainte Clare, where she was with her Religious daughters, who had their hartes surprised with an extreme terrour: but much more when they heard the barking and crye of those dogges so neere them, so that they were euen dying with the apprehension, not knowing where to seeke reliefe, nor of whome to hope for deliuerance from so eminent perill, but by the merittes of their holy mother, Whome with infinite fighes and teares, they aduertised of what they heard and saw. This holy virgin (though sick) encouraging her Religious, caused her selfe
with

fe with incredible constancie to be carryed to the gate of her Monastery, att the entry wherof in the sight of all her ennemies, she with very great reuerence placed the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist, in the pix before which falling prostrate on the earth, she with abundance of teares thus spake to her beloued Spouse IESVS CHRIST: Is it possible my God, thy will should be, that these thy seruantes, who cannot vse materiall weapons to defend theselues, and whome I haue here brought vp & noured in thy holy loue, should now be deliuered into the power of the Infideil Mores? Oh my God! Preserue the if thou please, and me likewise: for albeit thy diuine Maiesty hath committed the to my gouernment, yet is it not in my power to defend the from so great a pertill, sith this protection cannot be but by a worck of thine omnipotencie: Therefore doe I recomend the to thy diuine Maiesty, with all the affection that I am able. As soone as this holy virgin had sent these prayers vnto heauē, she heard a voice so delicate as if it had bin of a sucking child, that said: I will protect you for euer: The holy mother did not yet giue ouer to present her prayers, saying: My God, I humbly beseech thee, if so it be thy holy will, to preserue and defend this thy city of Alsissium, which doth nourish vs for the loue it beareth to thy diuine Maiesty. Wherto God answered: This city shall suffer much, but in the end I will by my fauour defend it. Sainte Clare hauing heard so gracious newes, lifted vp her face bathed with teares, and comforted her beloued daughters, saying: Deere Sisters, I assure you that no euill shall befall you: only be carefull to haue a firme faith and confidence in IESVS CHRIST. The diuine assisťace made no long delay: for the presumption and rage of the Mores was incontinently cooled, so that a sodaine vknownne terrour hauing surprised them, they speedily retyred ouer the walles which they had scaled and ouer leapt, to enter: They being thus by the vertue of the prayer of sainte Clare expelled, she priuately called the Religious that had heard the sayd voice of God, and commanded them, that howsoeuer it were, they should not diuulge what they had heard, during her life.

How the city of Alsissium was an other time deliuered by the prayer of this holy Virgin.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

ON an other time, one of the principall Capitaines of the Emperour Federick called Vitall d'Auerle, a man very ambitious of glory, full of courage and a notable Capitaine, conducted his troupes to besiege Alsissiu, and hauing encōpassed it, he exposed to wast and spoile the plaine contry therabout, making a totall ruine euen to the

very trees which were hewed downe, and then framing his siege, he vttered menacing and vaunting oathes, that he would not stirre thence, till he had giuen the citty a victorious assault: and so this siege so long continued that the besieged began to loose courage, as wanting many thinges extremely needfull vnto them. Whereof this holy seruant of IESVS CHRIST being aduertised, sighing in her hart, she called all her Religious, to whome she thus discoursed: My deere sisters, you know that all our necessaries haue euer bin supplied by the charity of this citty; so that we should proue very vngratefull, if we should not according to our ability asist them in this extreme necessity: then she commanded to be broughte her, ashes, and all her Religious to discoife their heades, and to giue them example she began to couer her bare head with ashes, wherein all the other Religious following her, she said: Goe ye to our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and with the greatest humility and most feruent prayers that you can possible, demaund of him the deliuey of your citty. It cannot be expressed with what seruour and teares these deuout virgins incessantly offered their prayers and teares vnto God, one entier day and one night, demaunding mercy in behalfe of the said citty besieged by their enemies. These prayers and teares were of such force and vertue, that the omnipotent in bounty and mercy had compalsion of them, and from the day following sent them his puissant asistance, in such fort that the enemies camp was defeited, the Capitaine constrained shamefully and in despight of his forces without sound of trompett to raise his siege: for he fled without euer after troubling the Asilians, being shortly after slaine.

Of the reuerence and deuotion which S. Clare had to the most B. Sacrament, and of the vertue of her prayers against the Devils.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THe deuotion of S. Clare towards the most precious Sacrament of the Altare was such, that she made it apparent in many of her actions: for though she were most grievously sick in her bed, yet would she so dispose her selfe therein, and be so propped and stayed vp that she might conueniently spinne, an exercise which she exceedingly affected, and wherein she desirously employed her selfe, and did it delicately: and with the threed of her labour, she caused to be wouen very curious and fine cloth, which she employed in furniture for the chalice. She one time got made 50. corporals which she sent in cases of silke to many Churches of the valley of Spoletun. When she was to receaue the most sacred Sacramēt, before she presented her selfe therunto, she was alwayes bathed

bathed in teares, and so with exceeding feare approaching, she did reuerence him that was hidden in the Sacrament, as acknowledging him to be the same that gouerneth heauen and earth. Therfore did the deuils so much feare the prayer of the espouse of IESVS CHRIST S. Clare, as they haue sundry times declared.

A very deuout woman of the bishoprick of Pisa came to the monastery of S. Damian to thanck God & his seruant S. Clare, for hauing bin by her merittes, deliuered of fise deuils that possessed her, which in goeing out of her body, confessed that the prayer of S. Clare did burne them, and to their great confusion expelled them out of the humane bodies which they possessed.

Of a merueillous consolation which S. Clare receaued on the feast of the most holy Natiuity.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

AS the glorious S. Clare was alwayes in her sicknesse with a liuely memory mindfull of her beloued IESVS, so was she correspondently visited by him in her necessities. As once in the night of the Natiuity when the world and Angels did so solemnly feast for the birth of our Redeemer, all the Religious went to the quier to Matines, and left their holy Mother accompanied only with her grievous infirmity: wherefore hauing begun to meditate on the great mystery of that night, and lamenting exceedingly that she could not assise at the diuine seruice, she sighing sayd. O my God, thou seest how I remayne here alone! and ending this, she began to heare the Mattins that were sung in the Church of S. Francis in Alsifum, very distinctly vnderstanding the voice of the Religious and the very found of the Organes: yet was she not so neere the said Church as she might humanly heare what was song there: but it must necessarily be concluded, that this was miraculously don in one of these two sortes: either that the singing of the said Religious was by the will of God carryed to S. Clare, or her hearing was extended extraordinarily, and by speciall grace of God, euen to our Lady of Angels neere vnto Alsifum. But this S. was further fauoured by a diuine reuelation, which exceedingly comforted and reioyced her, for she was by almighty God esteemed worthy, to see in spirit his holy cribbe. The morning following, her Religious comming to see her, she sayd: Deere sisters, blessed be our Lord IESVS CHRIST, that it hath pleased him, not to leaue me alone, as you haue don: but know that by the grace of his diuine Maiesty, I haue heard all the solemnity and all the seruice that this night hath bin performed in the Church of our holy Father S. Francis.

*Of the spirituall doctrine wherewith S. Clare nourced and eleuated
her daughters.*

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

THe virgin S. Clare acknowledged that she was committed to the Pallace of the great king, for gouernesse and Mistrisse of his deere elpouies, therefore did she teach them a sublime doctrine, and did comfort and aisist them with such loue and pittie, as with wordes cannot be exprest. First she taught them to cleare their soules of all rumours of the world, that they might the more freely attaine to the high secrettes of God. She also taught them to haue no affection to their carnall kinred, and entirely to forgett their owne houle, the better to please IESVS CHRIST. She admonished them also to surmount and misprize the necessities of the body, and to gett a habitt of repressing the deceiptes and appetites of the flesh, by the bridle of reason. She likewise taught them that the subtilt ennemy, armed with malice continually addresseth his hidden snares to surprize the pure soules, and that he tempteth the pious in other sort, then worldlinges. Finally she would haue them to employed in handy labour for certaine houres, that they might afterward be more promptly prepared to the desire of their Creatour, by the exercise of prayer, which after their labour they should vndertake, not leauing for such paine, the fire of holy loue, but rather by it, expelling the tepidity of deuotion already purchased. There was neuer seene a stricter obseruation of silence then among them; nor a greater forme and example of vertue. Neuer was there seene don in this holy house one act of vanity, neither by word, nor signes, nor was there discouered by any vaine discourte any desire of lightnes, so much were they mortified. Their holy mistrisse gaue good example by wordes and by her pious & brieue documentes, she taught her diuicples seruient desires, admonishing them to possesse and conserue them vnder the keyes and custody of strict silence. By meane of deuout Preachers she procured to her daughters, the holy word of God, wherof her owne was not the least part, she being filled with contentment and ioy when she heard the word of God preached, would with such deuotion and consolation reioyce in the memory of her sweetest Spouse IESVS CHRIST, that one time hearing the sermon of Brother Philipp de Adria, a most famous preacher, there was seene before this holy virgin a most beautifull child, which there remayned during almost all the sermon, comforting her with his ioyfull delectations, of which apparition she receaued such a sweetnes and delight, as she could
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no way explicate.

Albeit this most prudent virgin had neuer studyed, yet did she much delight to heare a learned man preach, well knowing that vnder the wordes of science lay hidden the sweetnes of spirit, which her selfe more subtilly obtayned and tasted with more sauour. She accustomed to say, that the sermon of whosoever preaching the word of God was exceeding profitable to soules, considering that it is no lesse prudence to know how sometimes to gather beautifull and sweet flowers from among grosse and rude thornes, then to eat fruites of a good plant.

Pope Gregory the ninth one time att the instance of diuers Prelates, commanded that no Religious should preach att the monasterie of poore Religious women without his expresse permission: wheratt the pittifull mother complayning, in regard that thenceforward her daughters should feldome be spirituallly fed with holy doctrine, with teares she sayd: Lett then all my Religions be taken hence, sith they are taken away who gaue vs the food of spirituall life. And with all sent away the Religious that appertayned to her monastery to serue them in getting almose abroad, refusing to haue Religious that should prouide them bread to reliefe the body, sith they were deprived her that gaue them bread to nourish their soules. Wherof his Holinesse being aduertised he reuoked his prohibition, referring all to the disposition of the Generall of the Frere Minors.

S. Clare had not only care of her daughters soules, but of their bodies also that were feeble and tender, for whose necessities she provided with exceeding seruour and charity. For she often in the night when it was cold went to visit and couer them, whiles they slept. And if she found any ouer-much benumbed with cold, or otherwise in ill disposition through strict obseruation of the commune rigour, she commanded them to take some recreation, till their necessities were satisfied. If any of her daughters were troubled with temptations, or were sorrowfull or melancholic, she would call her a part and louingly comfort her. Sometimes she would fall to the feet of those that were heauy and afflicted, to putt away the force of their grieve by her motherly cherishinges, for which they yelding themselues to this their holy mother, did not proue ingratefull. They reuerenced the office of Prelature in their mistresse, and followed the conduct of so diligent and secure a guide, and ayming their actions by the espouse of IESVS CHRIST, they admired the excellencie of such a sanctity and charity.

*Of the deuotion Which Pope Gregoire the ninth had to the virgin sainte Clare,
and of a letter which he wrote vnto her Whiles he was yet Cardinall.*

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

Pope Gregory the ninth had a merueillous confidence in the prayers of saincte Clare, hauing experienced their great vertue & efficacie, and often times when he was in any difficulty, both whiles he was Cardinall and bishop of Hostia, and afterwarde when he was Pope, he would by letters recommend himselfe to this glorious virgin, demaunding helpe of her, because he knew of what importance her assisstance was; this being in him not only a great humility, but also worthy to be dilligently imitated, to see the vicar of I E S V S C H R I S T on earth to begg helpe of a seruant of God, in recommending himselfe to her prayers. This great Pastour knew well what diuine loue could doe, and how freely pure virgins doe finde the port of the consistory of the diuine Maiesty open. There is extant a very deuout letter of this Pope, written to saincte Clare whiles he was Cardinall, which is here inserted to make appeare that the spirit of God made his residence in this Prelat, and what deuotion he carryed to the sanctity of the glorious saincte Clare.

To the most deere sister in IESVS CHRIST and mother of his holinesse, sister Clare the seruant of IESVS CHRIST, Vgolin miserable sinner, Bishop of Hostia recommendeth himselfe, what soeuer he is and what he may be. Well beloued sister in CHRIST IESVS, since the houre that the necessity of my retourne separated me from your holy speeches, and deprived me of that pleasure to conferre with you of celestiall treasures, I haue had much sorrow of hart, abundance of teares in myne eyes, and haue felt an extreme grieve. In such sort that if I had not found att the feet of our Lord I E S V S C H R I S T the consolation of his ordinary piety, I feare I had fallen into such anguishes as my spirit would haue forsaken me, and my soule would haue vtterly melted away, and not without reason, because that ioy failed me, with which I discoursed with your good company of the body of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST and of his presence on earth, celebrating the feast of Easter with you and the other seruantes of our Lord. And as whiles our Sauour by his dolorous passion and death was absent from the presence of his disciples, they were possessed with an extreme grieve and affliction, so doth your absence procure my desolation: and though I acknowledged my selfe a grieuous sinner, considering the prerogatiue
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of your merittes and the rigour of your holy Religion, I know not out of doubt but that the number and grauity of my sinnes are such, and so much haue I offended God the vniuersall Lord, that I am not worthy to be vnited to the society of the elect, nor to be sequestred from worldly occupations, if your teares and prayers doe not obtaine me pardon of my sinnes. And therfore to you I committ my soule, to you I commend my spirit, as IESVS CHRIST on the crosse recommended his spirit to his Father, to the end that in the terrible day of the vniuersall iudgement you giue an account for me, if you be not diligent and carefull of my saluation. For I confidently beleue that you may obtaine of the so- ueraigne Iudge whatsoeuer by your deuotion and your teares you shall demaund of him. The Pope speaketh not of coming to Alsium, as I desire: but I purpose to visit you and your sisters att my first commodity. Recommend me to Agnes your sister and mine, and to all your other sisters in I E S V S CHRIST.

Of the confirmation of the first rule of saincte Clare, inserted with her rule.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

THe holy Father sainct Francis by instruction of the holy Ghost, made a rule for saincte Clare, and the Religious that intended to follow her, distinguished & ordered by chapters conuenient, and conformable to the Rule of the Frere Minors, which rule this holy Father imparted vnto Cardinall Vgolin, then Bishop of Hostia, who was Protectour of his Order, and was after Pope by the title of Gregory the ninth, who was very affectionate vnto him, and confirmed the sayd rule in the rigour of a strict pouerty & austerity of life, not by bulle, but only of his Apostolicall authority, and *viua voce*. The Order of saincte Clare had not this rule confirmed by authentically bull, till the third year of the Popedome of Innocent the fourth, which was the year 1245. when the sayd Pope att the instance of certaine Prelates and of certaine Abbesses of the Religion of saincte Clare, instituted the second rule for the virgins of this Order, vnder the title of the enclosed Religious of the Order of sainct Damian, in which rule he dispensed with the Religious touching their vow of pouerty in commune, and the confirmation of this rule passed in the citty of Lions, which dispensation exceedingly afflicted saincte Clare and all her Companions, for the zeale they had to the obseruation of the holy Euangelicall pouerty. And not only the monasteries which desired the said dispensation and rule of Innocent the fourth, did accept the same, but euen other monasteries were enforced to receaue and follow it. But the Pope being afterward bet-

ter enformed, commanded the Generall and all the Prouincials, that they should in no sort constraîne the Abbesses and Religious of the Order of S. Clare and of S. Damian to obserue the rule which he had newly instituted: but willed and commanded that the first rule giuen by the holy Father saint Francis att the beginning of his religion, and confirmed by Pope Gregory the ninth, should be perpetually obserued, commanding and commending it to the Cardinall of Hostia Protector of the Order, to see it obserued, notwithstanding whatsoeuer appellations, & letters obtayned or to be obtayned.

The bull of Pope Innocent the fourth, att the instance of S. Clare, for renewing the graunt made by Pope Gregory the ninth

That the Religious of S. Damian may not haue goodes in propriety. Taken out of the 10. booke and put here in due place.

Cant. 1.

Matt. 6.

Innocent Bishop, seruant of the seruantes of God: to his beloued daughter in IESVS CHRIST Clare, and to the other Sisters of the Monastery of saint Damian of Afsisium, as well present as to come. Health and Apostolicall benediction. Because it is manifest that desiring to be dedicated only vnto God, you haue sold all your subtāce to distribute it among the poore, the better to renounce cogitations and desires of temporall thinges, and that you haue a firme resolution not to posses in whatsoeuer manner, any kind of possessions, nor immoueable goodes, in althinges following the steppes of him that for vs became poore, the true way, verity and life: The necessitie and want of corporall thinges being vnable to deterre or separate you from this firme resolution, because the left hand of the celestially Spouse is vnder your head, to sustaine the great weaknes of your body, which you haue subiected to the law of the spirit with an exceeding seruour and charity. This Lord also that feedeth the birdes and cloatheth the flowers of the fieldes, will reward you with himselfe in eternity, when his right hand shall embrace you in the perfect sight of him. Considering withall that with great humility you demaund of vs that of our Apostolicall fauour we confirme your sayd resolution taken to follow most strict pouerty: We by the renour of these presentes doe graunt you, that you may not be constrained by any whosoeuer, to take, haue, nor to retaine temporall possessions. And if any siter either will not, or cannot obserue this rule, lett her not remayne with you, but lett her incontinently be putt in some other place. We ordaine and command that no person, of whatsoeuer quality or condition he may be, presume to trouble your Monastery. And if any person ecclesiasticall or secular knowing this our constitution and

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confirmation, be so rash as to attempt in whatsoeuer manner against it, and if after three seuerall times reprehended and aduertised, he do not amend, & make satisfaction answerable to his default, let him be deprived of his office, dignity and honour, and lett such person be reputed as already condemned for his impieties by the iudgement of God, & therefore lett him be cutt off from the most holy cōmunion of faithfull Christians, and be obliged to the diuine vengeance att the last iudgement. But they who shall loue you in IESVS CHRIST and your Order; and especially the Monastery of saint Damian, the holy peace of God be with them, that they may receaue the fruit of their good workes, and find the recompence of eternall beatitude in the day of the rigorous and last iudgement.

The sequel of the aforesaid ninth chapter.

Afterward the same Pope confirmed the first rule *via vocis oraculo* with his owne mouth, formerly approued by the sayd Pope Gregory the ninth his predecessour, and by the Cardinall of Hostia Protectour, who by commission receaued from his holinesse had approued the same, in such sort that this first rule was renewed into force. This Pope Innocent afterward confirmed it by his bull in the city of Alsifium, the eighth of August, the second yeare of his Papacie. Wherevnto he was enforced by the deuotion and most humble request of S. Clare.

Apostolicall confirmation of the rule which S. Francis gaue to S. Clare.

Innocent Bishop seruant of the seruantes of God, to our welbeloued daughters in IESVS CHRIST, Clare Abbess and to the other sisters of the monasterie of S. Damian att Alsifium, health and Apostolicall benediction. The Apostolicall sea accustomed to consent vnto iust desires, & liberally to fauour the vertuous and pious requestes of them that seeke the same. And because you haue humbly required vs, touching the rule according to which you ought to liue in common in one spirit and vow of most high pouerty, the same rule hauing bin giuen you by the holy Father S. Francis & by you receaued of him with much cōtentment, & which rule our venerable Brother the Bishop of Hostia of Veltré approued, according as is more amply cōtayned & declared in the letters of the sayd Bishop, conformable to the commandement which we gaue him to approue it by Apostolicall authority to that effect cōmitted vnto him, desirous now to accord vnto your requestes, we confirme againe by these presentes the said rule by our Apostolicall authority, causing the tenour of this rule to be writte word by word in these presentes, as followeth.

T t t t 2 Vgo-

Vgolin by the grace of God Bishop of Hostia & of Veltré, to his most deare mother and daughter in IESVS CHRIST, Clare Abbesse of S. Damian att Alsium, and to her Religions as well present as to come, health and Fatherly benediction. For so much as you my welbeloued daughters in IESVS CHRIST, despising the pompes and delightes of the world, and following the warlike course of IESVS CHRIST and of his most sacred mother, haue chosen to dwell corporally enclosed to serue God, we commending your pious resolution, are willing benignely to graunt with a good will and Fatherly affection your demands and holy desires. And therefore inclining to your pious petitions, we by the Popes and our owne authority doe confirme, for you and all those that shall succeed in your Monastery, the forme and rule to liue by meane of a holy vnion and of the most high and sublime pouerty, which the glorious Father saint Francis hath giuen you to obserue, as well by word as by writing: which rule is here vnder specified as followeth.

The rule of the Religions of S. Clare, called Damistes.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

WE are to begin the rule & forme of life of the sisters which the glorious Father S. Francis instituted, which is in obseruation of the holy Ghospel, liuing in obedience and chastity, without any propriety. Clare the vnworthy seruant of IESVS CHRIST, and the litle plant of the holy Father S. Francis, promisseth obedience and reuerence to Pope Innocent and to his successours canonically elected, and to the Romane Church. And as she in the beginning of her conuersion together with all her sisters, hath promised inuiolable obedience to his successours, lett all her other sisters be in like sort for euer obliged to obey the successours of S. Francis, and sister Clare, and other Abbesses that shall succeed her canonically elected.

How the Religious must be receaued into Religion.

THE II. CHAPTER.

IF any Virgin or woman diuinely inspired present herselfe to you to be admitted to this course of life, lett the Abbesse be obliged to damaund aduise of her sisters: and if the greater part consent thereto, she may receaue her, after permission had of the Cardinall Protector of the Order, But before the habitt be giuen her, lett her
very

very diligently examine her, or cause her to be examined touching the Catholique Faith, and the holy sacramentes of the Church. And if she be found sincerely faithfull in those matters, and doe loyally confesse them, and promise entierly to obserue them, and that she be not married, or if hauing a husband he by consent of the Bishop of the Diocese become Religious, hauing vowed continencie, and she not hauing other impediment, as ouer-aged or infirme, or want of iudgement, and discretion to obserue such course of life, lett the manner and rule of liuing be dilligently declared vnto her: then being found capable, the wordes of the gospell be denounced vnto her, that she goe and sell all she hath, and endeaour to distribute it vnto the poore: which if she cannot effect, her good will shall suffice. And lett the Abbesse and other sisters be carefull not to confound their cogitations with her temporall affaires: but lett them leaue that care to her, that she dispose of her substance as our Lord shall inspire her. And if she demaund counsaile of them therevpon, lett them direct her to some vertuous person that feareth God, by whose counsaile she shall dispose of her goodes among the poore. After that, hauing cutt her haire about her garment, and discloathed her of her secular attire lett be giuen her three coates, one cloake, and lett her no more be permitted to goe out of the Monastery without profitable, manifest and probable occasion. The yeare of her probation expired, lett her be receaued to obedience, promising perpetually to obserue the life and rule of our pouerty. None may weare the vaile but after the yeare of probation and nouitiat: the sisters also may weare a cloake, to be more lighty, decently and commodiously prepared to labour. Lett the Abbesse discretely provide the cloathing according to the qualities of the personnes, places and time, and correspodent to necessity. The virgins that are receaued into the monastery before their age conuenient, lett their haire be cutt, and being disattired of their secular garmentes, lett them be cloathed with the same cloath that the other Religious do vse, as it shall please the Abbesse, and hauing attayned age conuenient, lett them be cloathed as the other, and make their probation. And lett the Abbesse commend them, as also the other Nouices to a mistresse, whome she should choose of the most vertuous of the monastery, who shall carefully instruct them according to the order of our professiō. Lett the forme aforesaid be obserued in the examination made to receaue the sisters that are to serue without the Monastery, and they may weare hose and shooes, and lett no woman or mayden dwell in the Monastery among you, if she be not receaued according to the forme of your profession. My deere and welbeloued sisters, I admonish, pray, and require you for the loue of IESVS CHRIST, who comming into the world

was wrapped in poore cloutes, and then by his most sacred mother layd in a manger, that you alwayes cloath your selues with the poorest and courtest cloath, and the meanest that you can possibly.

Of the manner of saying the diuine office, of fasting, and of the time of communicating.

THE III. CHAPTER.

THe Religious that can read, shall say the diuine office according to the vse of the Frere Minors, when they may haue a Breuiary, and shall read it without singing, and they who sometimes vpon some light impediment, cannot read the office, shall say their Pater noster as the others sisters that cannot read, who shall say for their Mattins twenty four times the Pater noster, for Laudes five, For the Prime, Third, Sixth, and Ninth houre for each seauen times the Pater Noster, for the Euen song twelue times, and for Compline seauen times. They also shall say for the euen song of the dead, seauen times the Pater Noster with Requiem æternam, and for the Matins twelue times. And the sisters that can read shall say the office of the dead. When any Religious of the Monastery shall dye, the sisters shall say fifty Pater Nosters for her soule.

The sisters, shall fast att all times : but on the Natiuity of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, fall it on whatsoeuer day, they may eat two meales. The yong, the weake, and the seruantes that liue out of the Monastery, may be dispensed withall for their fastes by mercy and charity, according to the discretion of the Abbess. But in time of manifest necessity, the sisters shall not be obliged to corporall fast.

Let them with permission of the Abbess, confesse twelue times in the yeare : lett them be exceeding wary not to entermingle any wordes in their confession, but what is necessary thervnto and for the saluation of their soules.

Let the sisters communicate seauen times a yeare, to witt att the Natiuity of our Lord, Maundie thursday, att Easter, Ascension day, Whitsunday, on the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and Allaintes: since the canonization of sainct Francis, for the eight communion, is added the day of his feast. It shalbe permissible for the chappelain to communicate the sick within the Monastery.

How the Abbess is to be chosen.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

THe Religious shalbe obliged to obserue the canonically forme in election of their Abbess, where they shall endeavour to haue the Generall of the Frere Minors, or att least the Prouinciall, who may by the word of God vnite them, and admonish them to agree, touching the election of their Abbess, to doe what shall seeme to them most profitable aduertising them not to choose a Religious that is not professed: and if one should be elected before profefsion, and made Abbess by any other meane, lett not such Abbess be obeyed, till she haue made profession conformably to the ordonances and to the rule of our pouerty. And the terme of her charge being ended, lett an other be chosen. And if sometimes after the election of the Abbess all the sisters iudge her vn-capable of such charge for the good of the seruice of God and of their Monastery, lett them be bound and obliged to choose an other, as soone as they can according to the said rule.

And lett her that shalbe chosen consider well what is the burthen which she hath taken on her, and to whome she must yeld an account of the sheep wherof she hath taken charge. Lett her endeavour to be rather Superiour to precede her Religious in vertues and pious conuersation, then in honour and dignity: to the end that the sisters induced by her example, obey her more for loue then for feare.

Lett not her carry any particuler affection, for feare that in louing one she may scandalize others, lett her comfort the afflicted, and be alwayes the first and last in assisting att diuine seruice. Lett her be the reliefe and recourse of the afflicted, that if the remedies of saluation faile them, she att least exempt and deliuer them from the disease of despair. Lett her haue a very diligent care of the comunalty in all thinges, but principally in the Church, in the dormitory, in the refectory, in the infirmary, and in their cloathing: And lett her Vicaresse be in like sort obliged to all the aforesaid.

Lett the Abbess be obliged to assemble all her Religious in the chapter att least once a weeke, in which place as well she as the others, shall accuse themselues of all their publike sinnes and of all their defaultes and negligences. Then lett her there treat and consult with her sisters of the affaires of their Monastery, because God doth oftentimes communicate and giue his Spirit to the meanest of the company.

Lett

Lett her not enter into great or important debt, but by the common consent of all the Religious and vpon a manifest necessity, and without lett it be by the intermite and mediation of the Procuratour of the monastery. Lett the Abbesse, as also the sisters, be carefull not to receaue any pledge or gage into their Monastery in regard of the troubles, encombers, and scandales that often arriue thereby. Lett all the officers of the monastery be also elected by the common consent of the Religious, the better to entertaine peace and fraternall vnion among them; and likewise shalbe chosen and elected att least eight Religious of the most discreet, of whome the Abbesse shalbe obliged to take counsaile in such matters as our rule requieth. The Religious likewise may and ought, if they know it to be necessary, put out such officers as are indiscreet and incapable, and choole others in their places.

Of silence and of the manner of speaking in the speake house and att the grate.

THE V. CHAPTER.

THe sisters shall keep silence from Cōpline till the Third howe, those except that serue without the monastery. But let it be alwayes kept in the dormitory and in the Church, as also in the refectory att the houre of repast, sauing in the infirmary were the Religious may alwayes speake discretely for the recreation and seruices of the sicke. They may also briefly and in a low voice open their necessities. It shall not be permissable for any sisters to speake att the speakehouse or grate, with out permissiō of the Abbesse or of her Vicaresse. And lett not those that haue leaue to speake in the speakehouse, presume to speake there but in the presence of two sisters, that may heare whatsoeuer is there spoaken. But lett them not presume to goe to the grate, if there be not att least three sisters present, sent by the Abbesse or her Vicaresse, who shalbe of those that are chosen by the Religious to be Counsaillers to the Abbesse. And lett the Abbesse and Vicaresse be obliged to obserue this order of speaking as much as shalbe possible, and lett not any speake att the grate but very rarely, and att the gate neuer. Lett there be putt before the grate within to couer it, a curtaine of black cloth, which shall not be drawne but for more conuenient hearing the sermon, or when a sister would speake with any one: Lett no Religious speake att the grate with whome soeuer in the morning before the sunne arise, not att night after the sunne is sett. Lett there be alwayes a black cloth before the speakehouse within-side, which shall
 neuer

neuer be drawne. Lett no sifter speake in the lent of S. Martin, nor in the ordinary lent in the speakehouse but to a Priest, to confesse, or for some other manifest necessity, which shalbe referred to the discretion of the Abbesse, or her Vicresse.

That the Religious may not receiue nor haue any Possessions, nor any thing proper, in their owne, or any third persons Custody.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Here is an adiunction of S. Clare, proper to her rule, which hath bin here annexed since the death of S. Francis.

IT hauing pleased he most high celestially Father to illuminate my hart with his diuine grace, that I might doe penance by the example and doctrine of the holy Father S. Francis, a litle after his conuersion, my selfe and my Religious promised obedience vnto him. Now the holy Father seeing that we feared no kind of pouerty, labour, affliction, or contempt of the world, yea that all these thinges did exceedingly content vs, hauing compulsion of vs, he prescribed vnto vs a rule to liue in this manner. Sith you are become daughters and seruantes of the most high, by diuine inspiration of our Redeemer, and that you haue resigned and committed your selues to the conduct of the holy ghost, I will and promise for my selfe and my Religious to haue alwayes care of you as of our selues, and this with a particuler care and diligence: which I will carefully accomplish and obserue during my life, and will that my Religious very diligently accomplish and obserue the same for euer. Now to the end we might neuer leaue the most holy pouerty which we haue vndertaken, & that this might be knowen to thole that shal succeed vs, a litle before his death he left vs his last will in these termes: I Br. Francis poore wretch and caitife, will follow the life and pouerty of my most high Lord IESVS CHRIST, and of his most holy mother, and therein perseuer to the end. And I beseech all you poore sitters, and counsaile you to liue alwayes in this most holy life of pouerty, and aboue althinges to keep your selues from forsaking it, vpon whose counsaile or doctrine soeuer that would persuaue you the contrary. But now as my selfe and also all my sitters haue euer bin careful to obserue the holy pouerty which we haue promised to God and to our holy Father S. Francis, I desire also that the Abbesses, which shall hereafter come to succeed me in this charge, be obliged, with all their Religious, to haue diligent and inuolable care not to receaue possessions, inheritances, or other thinges proper whatsoeuer reserved

of their owne, or from others that may giue them, nor whatsoever other thing that may be called proper, but that which shalbe needefull to a requisite necessity of the Monastery. Neuertheles they may haue and possesse a litle ground to make a garden, to supply the necessities and seruices of the sisters.

How and in what sort the Religious must labour and exercise themselves.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

THe sisters to whome God hath giuen grace and ability to labour, after the third houre they may employ themselves in some decent exercise and conuenient to their profession, that may be for the common profit, sincerely and deuoutly: yet in such sort that expelling idlenes, the capitall enemy of the soule, the spirit of holy prayer and deuotion be not extinguished, wherto all other temporall things ought to serue. And what they shall haue wrought with their handes, they shall bring to the chapter before all the other Religious, deliuering the same to the Abbess or to her vicarisse. The same shall likewise be done touching all the almes that shalbe sent to the monastery, by whome soeuer, that some prayers be offered in common, for such benefactors: and then such things shalbe distributed according to the common necessity, by the Abbess or her vicarisse, with the consent of the discreet or Counsaillers of the Abbess.

That the Religious may not appropriat any thing to them selues, and of the sick sisters.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

Lett not the Religious haue any thing in propriety: but lett them serue God in this world as pilgrimes and strangers in all pouerty and humility, seeking almes with confidence, and they must not be ashamed therof, considering that our Lord IESVS CHRIST became poore for vs in this world. It is this sublimity of the most high pouerty, that maketh and instituteth you, my beloued sisters, heires of the celestiall kingdome, making your selues poore of temporall comodities, to be ennobled with celestiall vertues. Lett it be your part and portion, to conduct you to the land of the liuing: wherto to arrive my dearest sisters, for the loue of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, despise and haue no regard to gett any other thing.

Let it not be permitted to any Religious to send or receaue letters,
nor

nor to take or conuey any thing in, or out of the Monastery without leaue of the Abbesse. Lett it neither be permissable to any Religious to keep any thing that is not giuen or permitted her by her Abbesse or Vicareffe. And if their kindred or others send any thing to the Religious, lett the Abbesse cause it to be deliuered: And if that Religious to whome it is sent haue need therof, she may vse it: if not an other that hath need may of charity vse it. And if mony be sent, the Abbesse by aduise of the discreetes, shall therwith prouide and supply the wants of her to whome it is sent. Lett the Abbesse be obliged to haue care of the sick sisters, as well to comfort them, as to procure by her selfe and others, that which their infirmity requireth, touching their diet and other thinges necessary, according to the possibilty of the place: and lett them be prouided for with charity and compassion: Considering that all the Religious are bound to sists, succour and serue their sick sisters, as they in the like case would expect of others. And lett one sister securely manifest and discouer her necessities to an other: in regard that if she that is a true mother, doe loue and cherish her carnall child, with what greater dilligence and care ought a sister to loue & cherish her spirituall sister? and therefore it shalbe permitted to lay the sicke on beddes of chaffe, and to giue them a pillow filled with downe or soft feathers, and they that haue need to be layd on Mattresses filled with wooll, and to haue coveringes, it may be graunted them. When the said sick sisters shalbe visited by them that enter into the monastery, they may briefly answere them in discourse of edification. And lett not the others sisters that shall haue leaue to speake, yet presume to doe it to those that enter into the Monastery, if there be not two of the discreetes present to heare what they shall say, whome the Abbesse or her Vicareffe shall nominate: and lett the Abbesse her selfe and the Vicareffe be obliged also to obserue this forme of speaking.

Of the penance first to be giuen to the Religious vpon occasions, and of the manner of negotiation without the Monastery.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

IF any Religious be so forgetfull as to sinne mortally against the rule or institutions of your profession, by the instigation of the deuill, hauing bin once and twice reprehended and chaptered for it by the Abbesse, and euen by the other Religious, without amende-ment: As many dayes as she remayneth obstinate lett her eat but bread and drinck water in the refectory, before all the other sisters and vpon the ground: afterwardes lett her be enioyned to a greater penance, att the

pleasure of the Abbelle. And lett her be prayed for, during her abstinence, demaunding of God to illuminate her hart, and to reduce her to penance. Lett the Abbelle and the Religious be wary not to be much offended or troubled att the sinne of any of their sisters, because anger and vexation, of it selfe hindereth charity towards ones neighbour. If it should happen, which God, if he please, forbid, that the sisters should fall into contentious wrangling against one another, and should utter wordes of scandall, she that shalbe cause therof, lett her, before she offer any prayer to IESVS CHRIST, goe fall on her knees to the feet of the other, and not only demaund pardon of her, but lett her entreat her to pray to our Lord to pardon her. And the party offended, remembering the wordes of our Lord, saying: If you forgieue not with a good hart, no more will your heauenly Father forgieue you, lett her most willingly and freely pardon her sister all the iniuries she may haue receaued of her.

Luc. 6.

Lett the lay sisters that serue without the monastery, and trauell abroad, neuer goe forth of the monastery but vpon some manifest necessity. Lett them goe modestly and speake litle, that the personnes with whome they haue affaires, be edified by them: And lett them haue a speciall care not to be in company that may be suspected, nor to entertaine any euill counsaile. Lett them not be Gossips to men or women, for feare that some occasion of murmure doe arise therof.

And lett them not be so bold as to recount vnto the Monasterie the newes of worldly matters and affaires, and lett them be most strictly obliged not to report abroad any thing done or spooken in the monastery that may occasion scandale. And if one of them doe simplie fall into one of these errours, it shall rest in the discretion of the Abbelle to giue her a penance answerable to her offence, yet with compasison, which she shall doe by the aduise and counsaile of the greater part of the discreetes.

How the Abbesse ought to visit her Religious.

THE X. CHAPTER.

LETT the Abbesse visitt her Religious, admonish, reprehēd and correct them with charity, not commanding them any thing against their soule and the Order of your profession. Lett the Religious be mindefull also that for the loue of God they haue renounced their proper will: and that therefore they are obliged in all thinges to obey their Abbesse, according to their promise, provided that it be not against their saluation and your profession. Lett the Abbesse vse such familiarity with her Religious, that they may comport themselues as mistresses

ses towards their seruantes : for in such sort must they liue together, as that the Abbesse be seruant to all her Religious. I also exhort my sisters, and in the name of our Redeemer I E S V S C H R I S T, I admonish them, to beware of pride, of vaine glory, of enuy, of avarice, of cogitations and sollicitude of worldly affaires: not to speake euill of any, to shunne dissention, murmure and diuision: but lett them be all carefull to preserue vnity of fraternal loue, which is the knott of perfection. Besides, they that cannot read, lett them not regard to learne, but lett them only consider, that they ought about althinges to desire to haue the spiritt of I E S V S C H R I S T and his holy operation, that they ought alwayes to pray vnto God with purity of hart, & to be humble and patient in afflictions and in their sicknesses, and that they ought to loue them that reprehend them, because our lord sayth: Blessed are they they that suffer persecution for iustice: for theirs is the kingdome of heauen. He that shall perseuer vnto the end shalbe saued.

Of the duety of the Portresse.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

THe Portresse must be prudent and of good conuersation ripe, of yeares and fitt to remayne and reside all the day long att the cell of the port, the dore wherof shalbe alwayes open : She must haue and keep with her a fitt companion, which shalbe appoynted her by the Abbesse or Vicaresse, to call any, or to doe what occasions and occurrences shall require. The port or gate shabe of two folding leaues and fastened with two lockes and padlockes which in the night shalbe shutt with two keyes, wherof the Abbesse shall haue one and the Portresse the other. The port shall neuer be without guard by day, and shalbe shutt with one key only. But it must be most dilligently guarded, very respectiue care being taken that it neuer be open but vpon necessity. When any one commeth to enter, they shall not be opened vnto him, but vpon permission formerly had of the Pope or the Protectour to enter into the monastery: where it shall not be lawfull for any person to enter before the sunne rising, or after sunne sett. Nor lett the Religious permitt any to enter into their monastery but vpon reasonable, manifest and inenitable occasion. If it be permitted to a Bishop to celebrat within the monastery to blesse the Abbesse, to consecrate a Religious, or for any other important occasion, lett him be content to enter with the least traine and most decencie that may be. When it shalbe necessary for any Officer or workman to come in for some work of importance, lett the Abbesse place some fitt person att the gate to admitt only those into the

Monastery that shall haue employment: and lett the Religious then vse all endeauour to keep themselues out of the sight of those that come in.

How the Monastery is to be visited.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

Y Our Visitor ought alwayes to be of the Order of the Frere Minors, such as shalbe constituted and commanded by the Cardinall your Protectour: and yet he must be of a life generally knowne for pious and exemplar. His office shalbe to correct the excesses committed against the order of your profession as well in the head as in the members. The said visitor must speake vnto you in publike place, that he may be seene of all. It is permitted him to speake with many Religious or with one alone, of matters concerning the visitation, as he shall thinck most to the purpose. You shall haue ordinarily without, yet neere to your Monastery, foure Religious, whereof one shalbe your Chaplen, who shall haue also a companion that shalbe a Priest of good report and discretion, and two lay brothers of vertuous and pious life, for the helpe and ayd of your pouerty, as we haue alwayes compassionatly found the said Order of the Frere Minors: which we still demaund as a singuler fauour of the said Order for the loue of God and of the glorious Father S. Francis. And lett it neuer be permitted to the Chaplen to enter into the sayd Monastery without the other Priest his companion. And lett those that shall enter alwayes remaine in some publike place, in such sort as they may see one another. And to heare the confessions of the sick that cannot come to the speakhous, to administer vnto them the communion and extreme vnction, and to asist them in the agonies of death, it shalbe permissible for the sayd priestes to enter in; and also for the solemne Masses and obsequies for the dead, or for the buriall, the Abbesse may admitt into the Monastery personnes of vnderstanding and fit for that purpose. And withall this, lett the Religious be alwayes obliged to haue for their Protectour, Gouvernour and Correctour, a Cardinall of the Romane Church, who shalbe by his Holinesse appointed vnto the Frere Minors: to the end they may be alwayes in submission and subiection to the feet of the same Church, firme and stable in the Catholique faith, perpetually obseruing the pouerty and humility of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, any his most holy mother.

Thus

Thus endeth the rule of the poore Religious Women, giuen att Perugia the 16. of September the 10. yeare of the Papedome of Innocent the fourth.

The sequel is the remainder of the 19. chapter.

Lett not any person be permitted to breake or rent this our letter and bull of confirmation, and lett none be so bold or rash as to contradi&it it. And if any presume to doe it, lett him know that he shall incurre the disgrace and malediction of God & his holy Apostles saint Peter and saint Paul. Giuen att Alsifium the 9. of August, the 11. yeare of our raigne.

The end of the confirmation of the rule of sainte Clare, which saint Francis instituted for her.

Of the the most seruent loue of Iesus Christ which enflamed the hart of S. Clare, and how the deuill tormented her: of an extasie wherein she continued a night and two dayes together.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

WHen S. Clare heard speake of the passion our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, she ofte accustomed to weepe in cōpassion, in such sort that out of the sacred woundes she would some times draw dolorous feelinges & affectiōs, and att other times ioyes and consolations of admirable sweetnes. And the crosse of IESVS CHRIST, which with her Spouse she carryed in her soule, and the weight thereof gaue her so much more tast of contrētment as she felt more grieve. The great abondance of teares which she powred out for the passion of IESVS CHRIST, kept her somerimes out of her selfe, and the internall loue which she had imprinted in her hart, in manner continually represented vnto her IESVS CHRIST crucified.

She ordinarily gaue exāple by workes, of what she taught her Religious by wordes. For admonishing them often and instructing them secretly touching some exercise, before she had ended her discourse, she was seene, to power out of her eyes abondance of teares. Among the houres of the diuine office that are sung in the Church, she was present with greatest deuotion att the Sixt and ninth, by reason that att such houres she was crucified with her Redeemer IESVS CHRIST.

The holy Virgin rerying one time to her priuate deuotion after the ninth houre, the deuill came to her, and did beat her outragiously,
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and euen did so hurt her in the face, that her eye was all bloud-shott and the signe remayned on her cheek: but S. Clare omitted nor for that to perseuer in her prayer. And to the end she might with the more deuotion apply herselfe to the cōtentmentes which she conceaued in mediating of IESVS CHRIST crucified, she ordinarily contemplated the misery of the fīue woundes: and therfore she learned by hart the office of the crosse, as the true louer of the crosse S. Fancis had taught her. She accustomed to weare against her naked flesh a girdle of thurteen knottes, wherto also were litle stones fastened in forme of knottes: which she did for a lecret memory of the woundes and doulours of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST. One lent vpon Maundy thurday, when our Lord IESVS CHRIST shewed a particuler loue to his disciples, att the houre of the agony that our Redeemer did sweate bloud and water in the garden, this holy virgin retyred into her oratory full of deep sorrow, and ioyned herselfe with almighty God in prayer as if she had seen him praying, and as if, by contemplation of the soule of IESVS CHRIST sorrowfull euen to death, she herselfe had felt and suffered his prison, his derisions, his iniuries, reproches, affrontes, beatings, sentence, crosse and most ignominious death, carrying in her memory a like sorrow, wherfore as vtterly transported, she laye on a straw-bed, and all that night and the day following, she was so absorpt and rapt out of herselfe, that her eyes being open and without motion, she seemed to hold them fixed in one place, and remayned so insensible being conioynedly crucified with IESVS CHRIST, that a Religious familer vnto her, comming often to see if she wanted any thing, she found her alwayes in one same manner. But on the night of holy laterday, this deuout Religious came to her deere mother with a candle, and partly by signes and partly by wordes, she made her, the best she could, to vnderstand the commandement that the holy Father saint Francis gaue her, that she should not passe one day without taking and eating something. So in the presence of this Religious, sainte Clare, as if she came out of another place, sayd vnto her: what need haue you to light this candle? is it not day? Wherto the Religious answered: Mother, the night of holy thurday is past, as also goodfriday, and we are now in the night of Easter eue. The Saint replied: my daughter, blessed be this sleep which almighty God att length after my long desire hath granted me. But I admonish and command you, not to speake herof to any creature liuing, whiles I shall liue in the world.

Of many miracles wrought by sainte Clare by the signe and vertue of the crosse.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

OVr Redeemer IESVS CHRIST recompenced well the pious desires and good worckes of his beloued Virgin sainte Clare: for as she was enflamed with an infinite loue of the misteries of the holy crosse, so by the vertue and power of the same crosse, she became noble in the signes & miracles of IESVS CHRIST. Oftentimes in making the signe of the crosse on the sicke, they were miraculously cured, and indifferently of all sortes of diseases.

A Religious man called Stephen, hauing a hote feuer that exceedingly afflicted him, the holy Father saint Francis sent him to sainte Clare, to make the signe of the crosse vpon him, as one that well knew her perfection and vertue, which he exceedingly honoured. Now the Lady Hortulana mother of sainte Clare was then in the Couent of saint Damian: for a litle before, considering that her daughters had espoused IESVS CHRIST, she came to them to Religion, where this happy lady serued as a true Gardener in that Garden enclosed with those virgins, our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, and with the glorious Agnes sister to sainte Clare, and the other Religious all replenished with the holy Ghost, to whome the holy Father saint Francis sent many diseased whome they cured, after hauing made on them the signe of the crosse, which they most hartely honoured. The sayd Religious then being sent to sainte Clare, she, as the daughter of obedience being therto commanded by the holy Father Saint Francis, presently made on him the signe of the crosse, then left him a litle to sleep in the Church, in the place where she was accustomed to pray, and the Religious hauing a litle reposed, arose sound, secure, and freed of his infirmity: then he returned to saint Francis, by whome he had bene sent to saint Damian, and consequently was cured.

A child of three yeares old of the citty of Spoletum called Matthew, had by chaunce a stone thrust into his nose, whence it could not be gotten out, so that the child was in extreme perill: wherevpon he was brought to sainte Clare, who hauing made the signe of the crosse on him, the stone incontinently fell out of his nose, and he was perfectly well.

An other child of Perugia hauing a filme on his eye was brought to sainte Clare, who touching the eye of the child, and making the signe of the crosse thereon, willed them that had presented the child vnto her,

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to carry it vnto her mother that she might also make the signe of the crosse vpon it, which hauing done the eye became cleare, and being purged of the filme that obscured it, he was presently cured, whervpon sainte Clare affirmed that this miracle was wrought by the merittes of her mother, who finding such glory to be attributed vnto her, reputed her selfe vnworthy therof.

One of her Religious called Beneuanta, hauing had for twelue yeares together an impositume vnder her arme, which did purge by siue several issues, sainte Clare had compasion therof and made on her the vertuous signe of the crosse: then with her owne handes taking away the playster, she was cured of her long continued sores. An other of her Religious called Aimia, being for more then a yeares space afflicted with the droply, together with an extreme paine in her sides and a burning feeuier, sainte Clare conceaued a very strong compasion of her, & therefore hauing recourse to her noble and infallible medicine, she made on her body the signe of the crosse in the name of her beloued I E S V S CHRIST, & the Religious was perfectly cured. An other seruāt of God borne att Perugia, had for two yeares so lost her voice that one could scarcely heare her speake: but hauing vnderstood by a visiō which she had the night of the Assumption of our Lady, that sainte Clare should cure her: the poore afflicted creature hauing very impatiently expected the breake of day, repayred with a strōg confidence vnto that holy virgin, and by signes craued her benedictiō: which fauour hauing obtayned, her voice which so lōg time she had wāted, became as cleare and shrillas euer it had bin. An other Religious called Christina that had bin lōg time deafe in one of her eares, & had in vaine tried many remedies, S. Clare hauing made the signe of the crosse on her head, & with her hād touched her eare, she recovered her hearing as perfectly and clearly as before. An other Religious called Andrea had a disease in her throat, the griefe wherof procured her much impatiēce: it was admirable, that among so many prayers enflamed with diuine loue, there should be a soule so cold, & among such prudent virgins, one so indiscreet & vncōsiderate. This Religious feeling her selfe one night more tormēted with her infirmity then ordinarily, afflicted & impatient that her paine did rather encrease thē diminish, she so crushed & pressed her throat, that she made appeare her intentiō to choake her selfe, thincking by violence to expell that swelling, so to auoyd longer torment & by ignorāce attempting to doe more then was the will of God. But whiles that poore Religious busied her selfe in this folly, sainte Clare by diuine inspiration had knowledge therof, wherfore calling one of her Religious she willed her to hasten downe and boyle an egge in the shell and cause sister Andrea to swallow it, which done to bring her to her presence. The Religious instantly dressed the egge, and forthwith brought

it to the sicke party, whome she found litle better then dead, hauing so crushed her throat that her speech was vtterly gone, yet she made her swallow the egge as wel as she could: then raising her frō her strawbed, shewith much labour led her to S. Clare, who thus spake vnto her: Wretched sister Innesse thee to God, and haue contrition for what thou intendedst to doe, and acknowledge that IESVS CHRIST will giue thee health far better then thou with thy owne handes haddest purposed to doe: change thy euill life into a better, for thou shalt neuer recouer an other sicknesse that shall succed this, but shalt dye therof. These wordes procured in this Religious a spirit of compunction and contrition, so that she, being entierly cured of this grievous infirmity, amended her life; and a litle after she fell into an other sicknes which saincte Clare had foretold, wherof she ended her life piously.

It doth manifestly appeare by these examples and by many other merueillous things, which this holy virgin wrought by this healthfull signe, that the tree of the crosse of our Sauour IESVS CHRIST was deeply planted in her hart, and that in a merueillous manner the fruites did interiously recreate her soule: sith the leaues therof did exteriorly worck such remedies, by the handes and merittes of this glorious sainct.

How saincte Clare blessed bread, wheron the signe of the crosse miraculously remayned.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

S. Clare was a disciple of the crosse, of such notable fame and sanctity, that not only great prelats and Cardinals much desired to see her, to heare and discourse with her, for which cause they often visited her: but the Pope himselfe boare her also this affection, in so much that Pope Innocēt the fourth repayed to her Monastery, to heare of her, as a secretary of the holy Ghost, celestially and diuine discourses. And hauing a long time conferred with her of matters of saluatiō & of the prayes of God, whiles they entertayned theselues in so pious a discourse, S. Clare caused the dinner to be prepared, & the tables for the Religious to be couered, causing bread to be brought thither, with intentiō to procure the Vicar of IESVS CHRIST to blesse it, to be afterwarde kept of deuotion. Their discourse the being ended, saincte Clare fell on her knees before the Pope and besought him to blesse the bread; wherto his holynesse answered: daughter Clare, I will that you blesse it your selfe, making thereon the signe of the crosse. The sainct thereto answered, most

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holy Father, pardon me if you please: for if I should doe it, I should deserue sharpe reprehensio in presuming to giue my benedictio in presence of your holinesse. The Pope againe replyed: well, that no presumption be imputed vnto you, and that you meritt therby, I command you by holy obedience to blesse these loaues, making on them the signe of the crosse. This daughter of obedience presently lifted vp her hand and made the signe of the crosse on the bread, whence ensued an admirable accident, for the crosse remayned on the bread, wherof part was eaten of deuotion, and the rest reserued as a holy relique, which euent filled the Pope with admiration, for which he gaue thanckes to God, then gaue his benediction to sainte Clare, who receaued it with great humility, and was much comforted withall.

*Of many infirmities of the glorious Virgin S. Clare, of her Weaknesse,
and how she was visited by the Protectour.*

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

THe Virgin sainte Clare had now forty yeares run the race of the most eminent vertue and practise of pouerty, and broken the alleblaster of her body in the most strit prison by fasting and rigours of disciplines, and by this meane filled the house of the holy Church with the most precious oyntment of her vertues, wherwith she drew after her an infinite number of soules to the seruice of I E S V S CHRIST: and as she already approached to the recompence of eternall glory, hauing supported diuers infirmities and consumed the forces of her body in her first yeares by the rigour of penance, she was also in her latter dayes oppressed and afflicted with diuers grievous sicknesses. But because in the time of her health, she was in such sort enriched with the merit of good worckes, that being sicke she gained the true riches of the merittes of patience, she yet enioyed the fruites of her vertues that were ripened in afflictions and molestations occasioned by diuersity of diseases. But the vertue of her patience doth evidently appeare in that hauing bin twenty eight yeares together afflicted with diuers diseases, she was neuer heard to vtter the least murmure or complaint: but continually were heard to proceed out of her mouth, pious wordes and thanckes-giuing to almighty God. Now being exceedingly weakened with infirmity and euery moment seeming to her the drawing on of the end of her life, it pleased our Lord IESVS CHRIST to prolong it till she might be visited by the eminent Officers of the Romane Church, wherof she was a seruant and special child. For the Pope being yett att Lions, & this S. beginning to be more tormented by her infirmities then she accustomed

med to be, a sword of sorrow through-peared the soule of her beloued daughters. But a virgin, seruante of IESVS CHRIST and a very deuout Religious of the Monastery of saint Paul, and Order of saint Benedict, had att that time this vision following: It semed to her that she did visit sainte Clare withall her sisters att saint Damian, whom she saw in a sorrowfull, yet precious bed, about which they all lameted expecting her death: and withall she saw come to the bolster of the sayd bed, a very beautifull woman, who sayd to them that wept: My daughters, weep not for her that is yet to liue, for she cannot dye til our Lord and all his disciples doe come. A litle after the Romane Court was att Perugia, where the encrease of sainte Clares sicknesse being diuulged, the Cardinall of Hostia hastened with great dilligence to visite the espouse of IESVS CHRIST, whose Father he was by office, Gouvernour by speciall sollicitude, and Fosterer and friend in most pure and chaste amitie; and her he comforted, applying and with his owne handes administring vnto her the most sacred sacrament of the Eucharist, and then made a very deuout sermon vnto the Religious: sainte Clare with great humility and in the name of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, besought him to accept in recommandation that her family, and all her other poore sisters of other Monasteries: but aboue all she most instántly besought him, to obtaine of the Pope and the Colledge of Cardinalls, a priuiledge and confirmation of holy pouerty. Wherto the Cardinall gaue his word, and as a faithfull Protestour of her Religion, & one most deuout and affectionat to sainte Clare, did afterwarde effect it: For Pope Innocēt the fourth att her most instát request, confirmed the rule which the holy Father saint Francis had instituted for her, as is formerly recorded: of which rule S. Clare had neuer till then other cōfirmation written then that of the said Cardinall, because the Pope supposing to induce sainte Clare, not to bind her Religious to such an extreme pouerty, did still deferre to confirme her rule by writing. But Innocent the fourth seeing the perseueráce and last will of sainte Clare, graunted the same vnto her by a bull, the eleuenth and last yeare of his raigne, as we haue before recorded. And the yeare being almost expired, the Pope came, with his Cardinals from Perugia to Assisum, wherein the first vision touching the death of the holy virgin was accomplished: for the Pope being in his office more then a man, by the authorithy which he hath of IESVS CHRIST on earth, whose person he representeth in the temple of the Church militant, the Cardinals accompanying his holinesse, represented the disciples of our Lord IESVS CHRIST.

How Pope Innocent the fourth visited S. Clare in her last sicknes, and gaue her absolution.

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

THe diuine prouidence would no longer deferre the accomplishment of the will of S. Clare, but her Spouse IESVS CHRIST came to eleuate into his celestially Pallace, his poore espouse and pilgrime on earth, who desired nothing more, that being deliuered of this mortall body, she might haue the sight and fruition of her most glorious IESVS CHRIST in his kingdome. Now then the members of this virgin being by continuance of her sicknes as vtterly decayed, there befell her a new weakenes, which being a token that she should in short time be called of God, she also vsed it as a ladder to mount to eternall saluation. Whervpon the Pope, Innocent the fourth, came to the Monastery of saint Damian, accompanied with many Cardinals, to visit the seruant of God, not doubting but she whose life he had already approued, was the most perfect in sanctity of all women of his time, and therefore worthy to haue her death honoured by his presence. His holinesse then being entred, he went directly to the glorious Virgin, and comming neere to her bed, he tendered her his hand to kisse, which fauour sainte Clare with exceeding ioy receaued. But besides that, she with great humility besought him to aford her his feet to kisse. The Pope to content her sate downe vpon a litle bench, and deuoutly presented vnto her his Apostolicall feet, on which this saint reuerently laid her face and mouth, most affectionatly kissing them, then with the serenity of an Angelicall countenance, she demaunded of him remission of all her finnes. Wherto the Pope answered: would to God my deere sister, I had need of such a pardon: but finally he gaue her the benefit of absolutiō, and the gift of his benediction, then left her in peace. She hauing that morning receaued the most sacred communion att the hand of the Prouinciall of the Frere Minors of that prouince, with her handes ioyned and her eyes eleuated towards heauen, she weeping sayd to her Religious: My daughters, prayse almighty God for the benefit it hath pleased him to bestow on me this day, which is such that the earth and the heauens are not of sufficiencie to recompence it, sith this day I haue both receaued the same Lord, and am esteemed worthy to see his vicar on earth.

How

How S. Clare comforted her sister S. Agnes.

THE XXV CHAPTER.

THe daughters were all about their mother, without whom they were in short time to remayne orphans, the consideration whereof through-peared their soules with a most bitter grieve. The heauines of sleep, nor hungar could not draw them from the presence of their mother: the contentment which they receaued in her presence made them forgett to eat and to sleep, because all their exercise was to weepe and particularly her most deuout sister Agnes, who was expresly come from the Monastery which she had newly erected att Florence, to be present att her death. Being then in this anguish, she tourned towardes her sister, and most instantly prayed her, not to deprivie her of her presence. Wherto sainte Clare answered: Deere sister, whome I cordially loue, sith it hath pleased God that I depart, be you ioyfull, and weepe no more: for I assure you, our Lord will shortly come to you, to visitt you with an exceeding consolation before your death.

Here followeth the testament of the holy S. Clare.

In nomine Domini Amen.

AMongest all other benefittes, which we haue receaued of our bountifull benefactour the king of mercies, and doe daily receiue of him: & for which we are most bound to praise him, one is for our vocatiō: which by how much greater it is, by so much more are we bound vnto him: the Apostle saith: acknowledge your vocatiō. God hath made himselfe a way, which he hath shewed by word and example, & our holy Father S. Francis, a most perfect zelatour, and follower of the same way hath taught vs: wherfor my beloued Sisters we ought to marcke the vnmeasurable benefitt which God hath done vnto vs: amongst the rest that which he hath vouchsafed to worcke in vs through his seruāt our Father S. Frācis, not only after our cōuersion, but alowhen we were in the captiuitie & vanity of the world: for after his conuersion (not hauing as yet any Brethren or companions) being to repaire the Church of saint Damian, where he was visited with diuine cōsolation, and cōstrained wholly to abandon the world, filled with ioy and illumination of the holy Ghost, he prophesied of vs that which our lord hath afterwarde fulfilled; standing then on the walles of the said Church he called with a loud voice in the french tongue, vnto some poore people dwelling therby saying. Come helpe me in this Church of saint Damian: for there shall come

came women of whose good life and holy conuerſation, our heavenly Father ſhalbe reioyced in his whole Church. In this may we obſerue the infinite bounty of God towards vs: who of his aboundāt mercy and charity hath vouchſafed to prophesie thoſe thinges by his ſeruant of our vocatiō and eleſtion: & not only of vs hath our holy Father prophesied theſe thinges, but alſo of thoſe who hereafter ſhalbe called vnto that vocation, wherto our Lord hath called vs. With what care of ſoule and body are we then bound to keep the commādements of God, & of our holy Father ſaint Francis, to the end that with the grace of God we may pay the multiplied talent. And our lord hath not only placed vs as an example vnto the ſeculer, but alſo vnto all our Siſters whome he ſhall call vnto our vocation, that we may be vnto thoſe who conuerſe in the world a mirrour and example. For our Lord God hath called vs vnto ſo great thinges, that they may take example of vs, who are giuen vnto others for an example, for which we are bound greatly to bleſſe & the more ought we for this to be ſtrēghened in our lord to doe well: wherefore if we liue according to the forme aboue mentioned, we ſhall leaue good example vnto thoſe which follow vs, & with ſhort paine we ſhall receiue the reward of euerlaſting life. After that our heavenly Father vouchſafed through his great mercy and grace to illuminate my hart in ſuch ſort that by the example and touching of our holy Father S. Francis, I began to doe penance: a litle after my conuerſion, I, with a few Siſters whome our Lord gaue me, haue willingly promiſed vnto him obedience, like as our lord through the light of his grace inſpired vnto vs by meanes of his merueillous life and holy doctine. Saint Francis then marcking that we were tender and fraile according to the body, yet neuertheleſſe nothing diſmayed with any neceſſity, pouerty, paine, tribulation, or contempt of the world, but that we eſteemed all thoſe thinges as great pleaſure, euen as he had experienced by the example of his Brethren: he reioyced in our lord, and with great charity inclining towards vs, he obliged himſelfe & his Brethren to haue alwayes ouer vs a ſpeciall and diligent care. We alſo by the will of God & of our holy Father ſaint Frācis, repaired to the Church of ſaint Damiā there to dwell, a litle after which time, our lord through his great mercy & grace multiplied vs: and then was fulfilled that which our lord had foretold by his ſeruant: for we had dwelt before in an other place: litle after that, he wrote vnto vs this forme of life, and principally that we ſhould perſeuer in this pouerty; and it was not ſufficient vnto him to haue admoniſhed vs therunto in his life, by many ſermons & aduertifemētes, to the end he might moue vs to the loue and obſeruance of this moſt holy pouerty: but he hath alſo giuen vs many writings, that after his death we ſhould not fall from the ſame holy pouertye, according to the example
of

of the Sonne of God, who liuing in this world did neuer leaue the same: which holy pouerty, our holy Father saint Francis, and his Brethrē did honour and obserue during his life; Wherefore, I Clare, seruant and handmayd of Christ, and of the poore Sisters of saint Damian, although vnworthy, and the litle plant of our holy Father saint Francis, considering this with my other Sisters, as also the highnes of our profession, made vnto such a worthy Father, and the frailty of vs and others, which we feare after the death of our holy Father, who next vnto God was our only pillar, and comfort: againe and againe we binde our selues vnto the holy lady pouerty: to the end that the Sisters who are, or shall come after my death, may by no meanes decline from the same.

This Pouerty I haue alwayes bin carefull (with the grace of God) to obserue, and to cause it to be obserued: and for more surety of the same, I haue made my Profelsion therof vnto our holy Father Pope Innocent the fourth in whose time we began, and haue confirmed it by his successours: that by no meanes in no time, we should decline from this holy Pouerty, which we haue vowed vnto God and vnto saint Francis. Wherefore I bending the knee both of myne inward and outward man: in all humility doe commend vnto the church of Rome, to our holy Father the Pope, and especially vnto the Cardinall, to whose protection, together wit the Franciscans we are committed, that for the loue of God, who was layd poorely in the cribbe, liued poorly in this world, and dyed poorly on the crosse, they will keepe the litle flock which God the Father hath gayned in his church, through the wordes and examples of our holy Father saint Francis: causing it to follow the humility and pouerty of his deerly beloued Sonne, the Father of wisdome, and of his holy mother, and that they will cause the holy pouerty to be obserued which we haue promised vnto God and to saint Francis; as also strengthen the for to obserue the same. And like as God gaue vnto vs our Father saint Francis, for our founder and helper in the seruice of God and of those thinges which we haue vowed vnto God and vnto him to obserue; and as he was carefull whiles he liued to exercise vs his plantes, by word & examples: so I commend and leaue my Sisters, who already are, as also those who hereafter shall be vnto the successours of saint Francis, and to the whole religion: that they wilbe alwayes an assistance vnto vs to profit from better to better, to serue God, and to accomplish and obserue this holy pouerty. If it should happen att any time that the said sisters should leaue their country or citie to goe vnto an other, they are firmly bound after my death in what place soeuer they are, to obserue the holy pouerty, which they haue vowed vnto God and to saint Francis.

Those which shall be in office as also the other sisters, shalbe carefull not to receiue more land then extreme necessity doth require, as a garden

den for hearbes vnto their necessity. And if for the defence or vse of the cloyster, it weere needfull to haue more land, they shall take but only to supply the necessity, and in this lād they may neither plough nor sowe. I admonish you all my Sisters, who are & shall be, that you labour to follow the way of simplicity, humility, pouerty, and also the modesty of holy conuersation, as we in the beginning of our conuersion, haue bin taught of Christ, and of our holy Father saint Francis through which (not through our meritt) but through the mercy of the liberall giuer; the Father of mercies hath spread abroad the sauour of our good name, as well vnto those who are far off, as to such as are neere.

And for the charity of our Lord IESVS lett the keepe the vniō of loue. The charity which you haue interiously, shew it exteriorly by workes, to the end that through your exāple, the sisters who are called vnto your profelson, may encrease in the loue of God, & mutuall charity. Also I pray all those who shalbe chosen in the offices of the sisters that they study to excell the others, rather in vertue and modest conuersation, then in their office: to the end that by their example, the Sisters that were called vnto the religion before them, be moued to obey them, not only in respect of their office, but for loue. The Abbess must be carefull & discreet towards her Sisters, as a good mother towards her children. She must also haue a prouident care of euery one according to their necessity, of the almosse which it shall please God to send her. She must withall be so sweet and indifferent vnto all, that the sisters may with out feare or doubt, declare vnto her their necessity, and that they confidently haue recourse vnto her, when the Abbess and the Sisters shall thincke it to be necessary. The Sisters that are subiect, lett them remember that for the loue of God they haue renounced their owne willes, wherefore I will that they obey their mother, as they of their one accord promised vnto God to doe: to the end that their mother seeing the humility, charity, & vnion which they haue vnto each other, may easily beare the charge, with the office she sustaineth: and because it is heauy & bitter they must through their holy conuersatiō, turne it into sweetnes. And because the way is narrow & the gate streight, which leadeth vnto life, & few there are that walke in it, and few that perseuer therein: blessed are they that haue receiued the grace to walke in it, and to perseuer vnto the end: lett vs therefore be carefull, if we be entred in the way of our lord, that by our fault and negligence we doe not fall from the same: to the end that we committ not that iniury vnto our lord, to this blessed mother the glorious Virgin Mary, to our holy Father saint Francis, and to the triumphant and militant church: for it is written, accursed are they who decline from your commandement. For to obtaine this grace, I bend my knee vnto the heauenly Father through the merittes of lord IESVS,
and

and of his blessed mother; of our holy Father saint Francis, and of all the Sainctes: that it well please him of his diuine Maiestie, who hath giuen a good beginning, to graunt grace also, that it may augment and perseuer euen vntill death. Deerly beloued Sisters, present and to come, to the end that you may the better perseuer in your vocation; I leaue vnto you this writing, and in token of our Lordes benediction and of the benediction of our holy Father saint Francis, and of me your mother and seruant.

The end of the testament of the glorious Virgin sainte Clare.

Here ensueth S. Clares Benediction vnto her Sisters, present and to come.

IN the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the holy Ghost. Amen. My deerly beloued Sisters, our lord giue you his holy benediction, and behold you with his holy eye of mercy, giuing you his peace: as also to all those that shall enter and perseuer in this our Colledge and monastery, and vnto all other of the Order, who shall perseuer vnto the end in this holy pouerty: I Clare seruant of IESVS CHRIST, and little plante of our holy Father S. Francis: your mother & Sister, though vnworthy, doe beseech our lord IESVS CHRIST, that by the intercession of his most holy mother, of the holy Archangell S. Michaell, and of all the holy Angels, of our holy Father S. Francis, and of al the holy Sainctes, that it wil please him to giue and confirme vnto you this benediction in heauen, and in earth by multiplying in you his holy grace: and in heauen by eleuating you into the eternall glory with his saines. And I giue you my benediction in my life, and after my death, in all that I am able, and more then I am able: With all the blessings, wherewith the Father of mercies hath or shall blesse his spirituall children, both in heaue and earth: or that the spirituall mother doth, or shalbe able to blesse her spirituall chirdren. Amen. Be alwayes louers of God, of your soule and of your Sisters, and be alwayes carefull to keepe that, which you haue vowed to God. Our lord be alwayes with you, and you with him. Amé.

Of the death of the blessed Virgin S. Clare, and of a vision which one of her Religious saw.

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

THe holy virgin, and seruant of IES. CH. was many dayes towards the end of her life afflicted with diuers diseases. The faith & deuotion which att that time each one boare her, exceedingly encreased, yea so

far forth as she was honoured as a S. being ordinarily visited by Cardinals, Bishoppes, and other Prelates. But, which is more admirable to heare, hauing bin seauenteen dayes without force to receaue any sustenance that was presented vnto her, she was neuertheless so fortified of God and encouraged of his diuine Maiesty, that she exhorted all those that would comfort her to be prompt in the seruice of God. A Religious mā intending to comfort her and to persuaue her to haue patience in so grievous a sicknesse that procured her so much torment, she with a smiling countenance & cleare voyce answered him: Brother, since the time that I knew the grace of my God, by meanes of his seruant saint Francis, no paine hath bin troublesome vnto me, no penance hath seemed difficult, nor no sicknesse irksome.

And as almighty God approached neere vnto her, & her soule being as it were att the dore to goe forth, the blessed virgin would haue the most pious and spirituall Frere Minors to be present, to discourse vnto her of the passiō of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, and by their pious wordes to enflame her more in the loue of God. Wherefore some of them who were vnto her true Brethren, in our Redeemer CHRIST IESVS were present, and amōg others Br. Iuniperus, the familier of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, who often vttered vnto her, such fiery and enflamed wordes of the omnipotēt God, that she by his preface being filled with an extreme ioy, one day demaunded of him, if he then knew nothing new of almighty God: wherupon Br. Iuniperus opening his mouth to answer her, there issued out of the founnise of his enflamed hart, infinite sparkes of such sublime wordes, that this holy virgin receaued therof much consolation. Finally turning her Angelicall face towards her deere and beloued daughters and sisters there present, bitterly weeping, she recommended vnto them the pouerty of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST in this her last passadge, praying and thancking God, for the infinite benefittes which they had receaued of his diuine Maiesty, which she particularly recounted vnto them; then she gaue them all her benediction, & also to all the Religious of her Monastery present & absent, and to all those that should enter into her Order. There were present two companions of saint Frācis, Br. Angelus, who though much afflicted did yet comfort the others, and the right simple Br. Leo, who ceased not to kisse the bed of the holy virgin, that was leuing the world, who was lamed of her daughters because they wer left orphanes & were no more in this lifeto see their most holy mother, and therefore they accōpanied her soule vnto heauen with abōdance of teares, without power to admit any other consolation then to desire to goe with her: wherwith being so afflicted, they could not without difficulty forbear with their nailes to rent their faces; but it not being permitted them to discharge thesel-

ues of such greife exteriorly, it did enflame in them a more burning fire within: For thofe espoufes of IESVS CHRIST were fufficiently morified by the rigour of Religion, albeit the force of greife did conftaine the to caft forth loud cryes and fighes, and to power out riuers of teares. The holy virgin att length being turned towards the, begā very sweetly to fay vnto her foule, goe my foule, goe forth securely; thou haft an affured guide to performe this voyage: for he that is they Creatour, hath fanctified thee, & hath alwayes conserued thee, affecting thee with a tender loue, equall with that of a mother towards her child. And thou my God, be prayed for hauing created me. A Religious fister asking her what the meant thereby: she answered: I fpeake to my blessed foule. Her most glorious Spoufe IESVS CHRIST was not far from her, & attended for her. The tounring to one of her Religious, she fayd: Doe you not fee my daughter, the king of glory whome I fee? Almighty God also layd his hand on an other Religious, who faw with her corporall eyes thorough the teares that diffilled from them, a glorious vifion; she being pearced thorough with the dart of sorrow, caft her eyes towards the gate of the houle, and faw enter a great proceffion of virgins richly cloathed in white, hauing each one a crowne of gold on their head: but one of them appeared more beautifull, fumptuous and glittering the the rest: For she had on her head an imperiall crowne, garnished with precious stones, out of whose countenance proceeded a light fo shining that it cōuerted the obfcurity of the night into cleare and bright day: It was without doubt the glorious Virgin Mary, Queen of virgins, who came to the bed of the espoufe of her sonne, to whome enclining she graciously embraced her, and incontinently she was couered and the bed also by the other virgins with an extreme fumptuous mantell. So the day following, which was the eleuenth of Auguft, this holy foule afcended to heauen, there to be crowned with perpetuall glory. Happy was her departure out of this miserable life, fith it was her entry into that of eternall felicitie. For the faftes which this S. performed in this exile, she is now ioyfull and had her fill att the magnificall table of the cirtizens of heauē: and for the humility and basenesse of her habite, she is now gloriously attired with the glory of Paradife. The continuall fighes and desires which she had for the prefence and loue of her deerly beloued Spoufe, are accomplished by the blessed vifion of God face to face, and by the assured fruition of the foueraigne good: leauing the way open to the example of sanctity, that we blinded, and miserable mortall creatures, reiecting these short, false and deceitfull pleasures of this world, may purchase the permanent, true and assured that indure eternally.

Of the honorable obsequies that were performed for S. Clare.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

WHiles the soule of S. Clare departed this life, the report of her deceasse was incontinently diuulged through Alsifium: whence both men and women in such abundance speedily flocked to the Monastery, that none seemed to be left in the city. Each one presently esteemed her a sainct, and called her the espouse of IESVS CHRIST, accompayning their discourses with great abundance of teares of deuotion. The officers of iustice repayed thither accompanied with many warlike Champions and a great number of armed men, which that night guarded the monastery, for feare that precious treasure might be bereaued them. The night following, the Pope with all his Court came thither, accompayned by all the neighbour people.

The Religious men of S. Damiã being ready to begin the office of the dead, the Pope would haue to besayd the office of the holy virgins, wherein he would haue canonized her before her buryall: But the Cardinall of Hostia hauing demonstrated vnto him that it was fitt in this affaire to proceed with more humane prudence, the Pope permitted the sayd Religious solemnly to proceed in the office of the dead according to the custome.

The said Cardinall hauing taken for his text, *Vanitas vanitatum & omnia vanitas*, made a very worthy and deuout sermon to manifest the vanity of thinges appertayning only to this world, where he exceedingly exalted that most eminent Contemptrice of vanities: which ended, all the Cardinals and other Prelates accompanied this holy body with an exemplar deuotion. All the funeralles being very solemnly accomplished, the cittizens of Alsifium thincking it not secure that this precious treasure should remayne so farre out of their city, they caused this holy body with exceeding great pomp to be transported, singing psalmes and hymnes with the sound & melody of diuers muscall instrumentes, and in a very solempne procelsion they carried it into the Church of sainct George within their city, where the body of sainct Francis had formerly bin reposed. And it was very reasonnable that he who in his life, had giuen a patterne of the way of life vnto this holy virgin, should as is were prophetically prepare her a place of sepulture. There was then a great repaire and confluence of people from diuers citries, townes, and villages vnto Alsifium, to thanck IESVS CHRIST, and to pray vnto this blessed creature, proclayming,

this

this virgin to be really a saint, and glorious, who now liueth in Paradise with the Angels, hauing bin already so much honoured of men on earth. Oblest virgin, pray now to God for vs, and gaine our soules to I E- S V S CHRIST in heauen, as thou hast conuerted and gayned so many, liuing on earth. The holy virgin passed this transitory life to the other of rest, the yeare of grace, 1253. the twelfth of August, forty yeares after her perfect vocation to God, and the 60. yeare of her age. She was enterred the 12. of August, on which day her feast is solemnised att Alsifium; and ouer all the holy Romane Church.

Of the miracles wrought by the merittes of S. Clare, and first of possessed personnes that haue bin deliuered.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

THe cheefest marches that saintes can haue, and the worthiest testimonies of faith and reuerence, are sanctity of life, and the perfection of good worckes: for saint Iohn Baptist, wrought no miracles during his life, and yet they that haue wrought many, shall not be esteemed more holy then he. And therefore the notable renowne of the religious life of sainte Clare, might suffice to make her appeare such as she is, if the tepidity, coldnes, and remissnesse of the world, and partly also deuotion did not otherwise require. But such this holy virgin was not only in her life time by her merittes swallowed vp in the depth of diuine illumination, but was also after her death of merueilous splendour ouer all the world by the light of her miracles; and as the most pure verity hath caused the recording of many of her miracles, that they remayne as testimony, memory and denunciation of her sanctity: therefore also the multitude of them enforce the rehearsall of some, that they may be generally diuulged and knowne.

A child called Iames, seeming not so sick as possessed, in regard that sometimes he cast himselfe into the fire, or into the riuer, fell rudely on the ground, and with such fury did bite the stones that he brake his teeth withall, forced bloud out of his head, and wrested his mouth most strangely, yea sometimes would seeme a mōstrer, so dubling and folding his members, as his feet would be on his necke. He was ordinarily twice in the day afflicted with the like tormentes, in such sort that two personnes sufficed not to restraine him from tearing of his cloathes, yea there was great difficulty to keep him from murdering himselfe. Many Phisitians hauing in vaine laboured to cure him, at length his Father named Guidalot had recourse to the merittes of S. Clare, affectionatly saying: O holy virgin honoured of the world, to thee

thee I adresse my self, to beseech thee to obtaine of God my sones health. Then full of confidence he conducted him to the sepulchre of this saint, and layd him therevpon, and he presently miraculously obtayned the fauour he desired, his sonne being perfectly cured of all his infirmities, and was neuer troubled after.

Alexandrina of the towne of Frata, neere to Perugia, was possessed & tormented with an abhominable deuill, to whose power she was so left that he made her fly as a byrd to the topp of a rock neere to the riuer of Tiber, then made her descend to a branch of a tree that did hang ouer the sayd riuer, then to hang on that branch, there playing her idle prances. This woman had halfe her body vterly benumbed, for which the Phisicians could find no remedy: At length she came with great deuotion to the shrine of sainte Clare, and inuocating her merittes she was cured of all her afflictions: for she had also the gout in her left hand, and her body halfe paraliticall was cured, and withall she was entierly freed of the oppression and seruitude of the deuill.

An other woman of the same place was cured before the sayd sepulcher, who was in like sort possessed with the deuill, and had withall many other diseases.

Of many that were miraculously cured of diuers diseases.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

A French youth, going to Rome in company of others his country men, fell sick and lay by the way, and by the force of his infirmity lost his sence and speech, and his body became deformed as it were a monster, then became he so furious that he could not be held, so that he seemed ready to dye; which spectacle did not only moue his companions to compasion, but did also exceedingly terrifie them: and therefore they bound him to a biere and carryed him to the Church of sainte Clare, where hauing placed him before her sepulcher, they applyed them all to prayers, inuocating the helpe of God and of the S. who made such intercession for the yong man, that he was in an instant entierly cured.

A man of the citty of Spolerum, called Valentin, was exceedingly afflicted with the falling sicknesse, in which he fell six times a day in whatsoever place he was, and besides he had one foot so wrested awry that he was vterly lamed: he was brought on an asse to the sepulcher of S. Clare, where hauing remayned two dayes and three nights, the third day attempting to moue his lame foot, and none being neere him, he made such a noyse, that being heard by some a farre off, they seemed to
heare

heare the kreaking of a peice of dry wood, and the man was instantly cured of both the one and the other his sayd diseases.

The sonne of a woman of Spoletum, called Iames of twelue yeares old, being blind, could not goe without a guid: being once forsaken by him that conducted him, he fell into a pitt, brake one of his armes, and hurt his head. The night following sleeping by the bridge of Vauie, a woman appeared vnto him, and sayd: Iames, if thou come to me to Alsifium I will cure thee. Arising early in the morning, he much admired att the vision, which he recounted vnto two other blind men, who answered him: Brother, we haue lately heard of a Lady that is dead in the citty of Alsifium, att whose sepulcher God worcketh by her merittes great miracles: which the blinde youth hauing heard, he left the two other blind men, and with a strong confidence hastened to Alsifium: in the way he lodged att Spoletum, where in the night he had the same vision, which encreased his hope of recouering his sight, and made him hasten in time to arriue to the church of saincte Clare. But he found it so filled with worldly people, that he could not enter: which exceedingly troubled him. But seeing no remedy, he rested att the dore, and there remayned till the euening, where this poore blind youth being weary by his iorney, and afflicted for that he could not enter into the church, settled himselfe the best he could, to rest vpon the ground, leaning his head against a great stone, and so slept: and presently the third time heard the sayd voice, speaking: Iames, God will doe thee good, if thou canst enter: and incontinently awaking out of that sleep, he began to cry and begge of the people with abondance of teares, to permitt him to enter, which hauing a long time continued, they gaue him place: and hauing discloathed himselfe, putting his girdle about his neck, he went to the sepulcher of the saint, before which with great reuerence and humility he fell on his 'knees,' and hauing persisted sometime in prayer, beseeching saincte Clare to intercede for him, he fell into a gentle slumber, wherin saincte Clare appeared vnto him and sayd: Arise Iames, for thou art already cured: and being awaked and raysed on his feet, the defect of his sight left him, and by the vertues and merittes of this Sainct he clearly saw, for which he glorified God, and gaue him thanckes for so admirable a worcke, exhorting all present to doe the like, and to prayse our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, in his holy seruant.

Of the lame and paralitiques cured by saincte Clare.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

A Cittisen of Perusia called Iohn Martin de Buony, wēt one time with many other Cittisens out of the citty to fight against their enemies of Tullinium: the skirmish being ended, Iohn found his hand exceedingly hurt with the blow of a flint stone, and the bone being broken, he was therby maymed: hauing bin att extreme coste for the cure therof, yet without any remedy, but still enforced to carry his arme in a scarfe, he alwayes complayned therof as of a desperat mayme, and asked counsell about cutting off his hand, but hauing one day heard speech of merueillous matters wrought by almighty God att the intercession of saincte Clare, he with a strong faith vowed to goe to her sepulcher, whither arriuing he very deuoutly and reuerently presented her a hand of wax, then fell on his knees and made his feruent prayers to God, that it would please his diuine Maiesty, by the merittes of that holy virgin to cure him. The successe was admirable, for before this gentleman arose, he felt his hand entierly cured, for which he gaue thanckes to God and to the Saint.

A yong man of Castrouitoly, called Petronius, was so consumed with a disease which had for three yeares continually afflicted him, that he seemed to be already withered and corrupted, yea he was therby brought to such weakenesse, that in goeing he stooped with his face as it were on the ground, and found great difficulty to walke, though with a staffe in his hand to support him. His Father hauing already bin exceedingly chardged about his cure, continued yet in resolution to employ the residue of his substance, out of his vehement desire to see his sonne cured. But the Phisitions hauing assured him that there was no hope of cure by humane art, he had recourse to the new Saint: of whose vertue hauing heard much report, he caused his sonne to be carryed where the Reliques of saincte Clare reposed. And hauing made his prayers by her sepulcher, he recovered his former health, and miraculously arose sound and straight as if he had neuer endured infirmity, yea he ran, leapt, and prayled God and saincte Clare, inducing all present to haue greater faith and deuotion towards her.

*The gifts of
graces
are dis-
tinguished.*

In the towne of saint Quiric, within the diocesse of Alsifium, a child of ten yeares old, hauing bin borne lame, went so pittifully and painfully, that if he chanced to fal to the ground, he could not rise againe but with extreme difficulty. His Mother had many times recommended him

him to S. Francis, yet found he no redresse: but vnderstanding afterward that the virgin sainte Clare was very famous for infinite miracles which by her merittes were wrought att her sepulcher, she caused her sonne to be carryed thither, and incontinently after he had bin there, his bones were setled in their places, and his members were cured: that which saint Francis, entreated by deuout prayers would not graunt, he referred to be obtayned and impetrated by the merittes of his disciple sainte Clare.

A Cittisen of Augubia, called Iames le Franch, had a sonne of fise yeares old to lame that he could not goe, which he very impatiently supported, it seeming to him that the torment of his child was a reproch vnto his honour and family. When this child was on the ground, he would wallow and creep in the dust in that sort to goe: and if he would stay himselfe against any thing to arise, he could not: for nature had giuen him only a desire, but no force and ability therunto. But his Father and mother consulted to make a vow for him, and to offer him to the merittes of sainte Clare, to whome they promised, that being cured, he should be called hers. The vow being made, the espoule of I E S V S CHRIST cured this child, who began so well to goe, that without any helpe he went to the sepulcher of the sayd saint.

A woman of Castel Menany, called Plenaria, had bin long time benumbed, in such sort as she could not goe without a staffe: but causing herselfe to be carryed to the sepulcher of S. Clare, and hauing there deuoutly offered her prayers, she the day following obtayned what she there with faith demaunded. So she retourned home on her owne feet, who came thither supported by the feet of others.

A woman of Perugia had a swelling on her cheeke which tormented her a long time, and besides had al ouer her body many ring wormes & rettars, she had also her neck greater then her head. And often thincking of S. Clare, she one day went to her church, where with great deuotion and a true faith she made her prayers: and continuing by her sepulcher till euen within night, she fell into a great sweat, wherby the swelling began to wax dry and to shrink, and so by litle and litle she was so perfectly cured, that there remayned no shew of scarre.

How two children were by sainte Clare rescued and preserued from the rage of Wolves.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

THe vally of Spoleū was accustomed to be much afflicted with wolves, who did ofte prey there on humane flesh. There dyed a woman

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called Bonna, on the Mount Galien, within the diocesse of Alsifium, who hauing two children, had scarce ended her lamentations for the one which the wolues had deuoured, but, whiles she was busy in her house they carryed away the other. The wolfe carryed her child to the top of the mountayne, & graped it by the throat when a labourer in the vineyardes hearing the pittifull cry of the child, called the mother, and admonished her to haue care of her sonne, in regard he heard a crying voice like to his. The woman not finding her sonne, presently beleued that the wolfe had sealed on him, and therfore began to rayse her lamentation towards heauen, deuoutly inuocating the helpe of S. Clare in these tearmes: O blessed saincte Clare, haue compassion on me miserable woman, and restore me my child. Alas heare if thou please the prayers of an infortunate mother! permitt me not to continue in this so rigorous desolation. Whiles this poore woman so recommended her distresse to saincte Clare, her neighbours furnished with weapons hastened after the rauening wolfe, and comming to the top of the sayd mountaine, they found that he had left the child wounded in the throat, whose woundes a dogge was licking. And so the child was safely recovered by the merittes of saincte Clare, who was inuocated by his mother, to whome he was brought, and was incontinently restored to perfect health.

A litle girle of the towne of Canary, being about noone abroad in the ayre where she did some seruice to an other woman, there came a wolfe, which being taken by the girle but for a dogge, he lept on her neck & tooke hold of her head. The other woman and the mother of the girle there present, ran after, and cryed for helpe, inuocating sainte Clare: and it was admirable to heare, that the child being in the teeth of the wolfe reprehended him, saying: Thou theefe, how canst thou carry me farther I being recommended to that holy virgin? The wolfe as daunted with those wordes, gently sett the girle on the ground, and as a theefe found and taken in the fact, he fled: and the girle returned without any hurt vnto her mother.

How diuers were deliuered from drowning and danger of sea, hauing inuocated S. Clare.

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

A Shippe fraught with many personnes departing out of the port of Perusia, for the ile of Sardinie, the first night there arose such a terrible tempest, that the force therof leaked the bottome of the vessell: which made apparent to all therein, that they were in most

most euident perill of shipwrack : wherefore they began to inuocate the Queene of heauen, and many other sainctes to alsist them. Att length perceiuing no apparence of their liues safety, they addressed themselues to saincte Clare, and vowed to her, that if by her intercession they were deliuered, they would goe all naked to their very shirtes, with their girdle about their necks, to visitt her sacred reliques att Alfisium, carrying each a wax light of two poundes in their handes. This vow being made, they saw three great lightes discend from heauen, the one wherof settled on the forepart of the shipp, an other on the poupe, and the third on the pompe, by the vertue wherof the leakes where the water entred did close, and the sea became so quiet and calme, that with a gracious wind the vessell was accompanied and conducted by the said lightes to the part of Arestan, whither being arriued and landed, & the marchandise all safely putt on shoare, the sayd lightes vanished, and (which was admirable) the shippe presently sunk and was cast away. They that had gone out of her acknowledging the miracle, att their retourne to Pifa deuoutly accomplished their vow, yelding infinite thanckes to almighty God, and to the virgin sainte Clare, for the great benefitt receaued by her intercession.

How S. Clare was canonized by Pope Alexander the fourth.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

Pope Innocent the fourth liued so litle time after the death of sainte Clare that he cold not canonize her. The holy siege hauing bin two yeares vacant, Alexander the fourth was chosen Pope, who being exceedingly deuoted and a friend to piety, protectour of Religious, hauing heard true relation both of the miracles which our Lord IESVS CHRIST wrought, for the glory of his holy seruant, and of the renoume of her vertue, which daily more and more diuulged it selfe in the Church: knowing also that her canonization was generally desired, his holinesse being also induced by the assurance of so many miracles, therefore begā to treat in the Consistory of her canonizatiō. Wherin to proceed more maturely, there were elected prudent and vertuous men to examine the sayd miracles and the irreprehensible life of the saint. Which being done, and this holy virgin being found and proued to haue bin in her life an vnspotted mirrour of all vertues, and to haue bin ennobled of almighty God after her death by true and approued miracles, the day of her Canonization was appointed, when were present with his Holinesse many Cardinals, Archbishoppes, Bishoppes, other Prelates, and a great number of Priestes and Religious, with in-
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finite noblemen, gentlemen and others each in their degree and quality, before whome the Pope proposed this sacred affaire, demanding the opinion of the Prelates: who with one accord gaue consent, and affectionatly belought the said sainct might be canonized in the Church, as IESVS CHRIST had glorified her in heauen. In this sort then, three yeares after her happy decease, Pope Alexander caused her solemnly to be enrolied in the Catalogue of Sainctes, ordaining her feast to be celebrated with solemnity in the Church, the 12. of August. This Canonization was performed the yeare of grace 1255. and the first of the raigne of the Pope, to the praise and glory of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST.

The life of saincte Agnes sister to saincte Clara.

The conuersion of this Sainct is described before in the fift chaptes of this present booke, and therefore to auoyd reiteration it is here pretermitted.

How saincte Agnes was by the holy Father sainct Francis sent to Florence, there to build a Monastery.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

THe virgin and espouse of our Redeemer IES. CH. Agnes true sister & companion of S. Clare, as well in bloud as in vertue and Religion, perseuered and persisted in notable sanctity of life in the Monastery of saint Damian, and from the time of her entrance into Religion euen to her death, she alwayes woare a very rough haircloth next her tender flesh. Her ordinary refection was almost alwayes bread and water; she was naturally very pittifull to euery one. Sainct Francis finding this virgin to haue obtrayned of God, by meane and assistance of her sister, a worthy perfection, he sent her to Florence there to found a new Monastery of poore sisters called Mount Celi, wherof saint Francis made her Abbess. This holy virgin induced many soules to abandon the world to serue IESVS CHRIST, which she did by meane of her pious conuersation and sanctity of life, by holy discourses and wordes of God, that sweetly flowed out of her mouth: and as a perfect Contemprice of transitory thinges and follower of IESVS CHRIST, she planted in this Monastery (conformably to the desire of the holy Father saint Francis and of saincte Clare) the obseruance and profession of Euangelicall pouerty: but being exceedingly grieved with the absence of her sister, she wrote this letter following

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vnto her, and to all the Religious of the Monastery of saint Damian, wherein she had receaued her education and spirituall nourriture.

A Copie of the letter which sainte Agnes wrote to her Sister sainte Clare, and to all the others sisters of her Monastery.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

TO the venerable and beloued Mother in our Lord CHRIST IESVS Clare, and to all her Couent, humble sister Agnes, the least of the disciples of IESVS CHRIST and of yours recommendeth herselfe vnto you all, and prostrate att your feet doth yeld you all submission and deuotion, wishing vnto you what is most precious from the most high king of kinges. To the end that all nature which hath bin created of God, doe acknowledge it selfe to be such as none can persist of it selfe in its owne essence, the diuine prouidence most prudently permitteth that when any one esteemeth himselfe to be in prosperity, then is he drowned and plunged in aduersities. This I tell you (my most deere Mother) that you may know what affliction and extreme heauines possesseth my spirit, being so tormented that hardly can I speake: and this because I am corporally separated from you and my holy sisters, with whome I hoped to haue happely liued and dyed in this world. So farre is this my griefe from slackning, that it continually encreaseth: which as it had a beginning, so doe I beleue it will finde no end in this world. For it is so continuall and famillier vnto me, that it will neuer forsake me. I was perswaded that life and death should be a like, without power of any separation on earth, amongst them who haue one same conuersation and life in heauen, and must haue one same sepulture, them I say, who one same and equall naturall profession, and one same loue hath made sisters. But as far as I can see, being abandoned and afflicted on each side, I am much mistaken. O my holy sisters! I beseech you to be reciprocally grieued with me, and lett vs weepe together, I being assured that you shall neuer experience any doulour comparable to that which I now feele, in being separated from them with whome IESVS CHRIST had conioyned me. This griefe tormenteth me incessantly, this fire burneth my hart continually, so that being on each side afflicted, I know what to thincke, neither doth any hope remayne but to be assisted by your prayers, that Almighty God easing this affliction, may make it tollerable vnto me.

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O my most gracious mother! what shall I doe and what shall I say? sith I know not that euer I shall see you more, or likewise my sisters. O that it were lawfull for me to vtter vnto you the conceytes of my soule, as I would desire, or that I could open my hart vnto you on this paper, then should you see the liuely and continuall dolour that tormenteth me! My soule burneth interiorly, being afflicted with an incessant fire of loue, and my hart groweth, sigheth and lamenteth, with desire of your presence. Myne eyes cannot haue their fill of weeping, and albeit I seeke some consolation against this bitterness, yet can I find none: but euery thing turneth into griefe: and much more when I consider the meanes to see you. I am entierly steeped in these anguishes, hauing none that can comfort me in this life, but that I receaue a litle consolation from the liberal hand of our Saviour IESVS CHRIST. Which causeth me to beseech you all to giue thanckes vnto his diuine maiesty for this fauour and mercy extended towards me, and for that through his grace I finde in this Couent such concord, peace, and charity as by wordes cannot be expressed; these sisters hauing receaued me with exceeding loue & deuotion, yelding me obedience with extraordinary promptitude and reuerence. They all with one accord recommend themselves to our Lord IESVS CHRIST & to you, my sister, and to all the sisters of the monastery; and I recommend both my selfe and them to your prayers, beseeching you as our Mother, to be mindfull of them and of me, as of your daughters: and know you that they and I, will all the dayes of our life, obserue and keep your holy preceptes and aduertisements. Besides, I desire you should know that the Pope hath accorded to whatsoeuer I demaunded him, conformably to your intention and mine, and particularly in the matter you know; viz. that we may not possesse any thing proper. I beseech you my most deere Mother, to procure of the R. Father Generall that he often visit vs, to comfort vs in God, whose grace be with your spirit, Amen.

*Of an extasie of S. Agnes, and how S. Clare saw her thrice
crowned by an Angell.*

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

Sainte Clare in her last sicknes obtained that her sister S. Agnes might come to see her in the monastery of S. Damian, to keep her company during the few dayes she had to liue. And so S. Agnes hauing left her Couent well grounded in Religion and sanctity, she came to Assisium, where sainte Clare being one night in prayer a part from her sister, she neuertheles saw her, being also in prayer, lifted from
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the earth, and an Angell to crowne her head three severall times with so many crownes. The day following she demanded of her sister, what prayer or contemplation she had made the night past: But she of humility vnwilling to manifest her prayer, being att length enforced by obedience, made her this relation: I considered the great goodnes and patience of almighty God, wherby he supporteth such enormous offences of sinners; which I considered with a deep sorrow and compassion. Then I thought and yet doe thinck on the loue which almighty God beareth to sinners, and how he endured death to saue them: Thirdly I considered and doe consider, and am with cōpalsion exceedingly afflicted, for the soules in purgatory and their great tormentes: and because they cannot helpe them selues, I asked mercy for them of the most sacred woundes of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST.

How S. Agnes sent S. Clares vaile to the monasterie of Florence, and of her death and translation to S. George of Asisium, with all her Religions, into a new Couent.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

After the death of sainte Clare, sainte Agnes sent her black vaile which she did ordinarily weare, to the poore Religious of Mount Celi, which she had founded att Florence: which she did in regard of her great amity towards them, &c that they might inherite some reliques of sainte Clare for their comfort and deuotion. That vaile is yet in the sayd monastery, where it is so carefully preserued, that in substance and colour it seemeth still new. There is likewise to be seene in the same monastery a cloake of saint Francis, by which reliques our lord worcketh many miracles. A litle after the death of sainte Clare, sainte Agnes, also desired to be present att the mariage of the lambe, whither she was inuited: but she first receaued the consolatiō which sainte Clare had promised her, that before she departed out of this life, she should see her Spouse IESVS CHRIST, as a tast of the eternall felicities wherto she was to be eleuated and conducted by her sweet Spouse CHRIST IESVS. She dyed the 56. yeare of her age, replenished with perfect sanctity; and being deliuered out of this prison, she went to possesse the kingdome with Angels and the holy virgins that had bin consecrated to IESVS CHRIST, in which glory these two sisters and daughters of Sion, companions in heauen by nature and grace, doe prayle God without end. There assembled a great multitude of people vpon the death of sainte Agnes, and they with great deuotion ascended the ladder of the monastery of saint Damian,

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hoping there to receaue some spirituall consolation of sanctity, but it happened that the chaine which held the ladder did slip, so that al those that were on it, fell downe one vpon an other: which made a great bruit and clamour by those that were hurt, who hauing with a strong faith inuocated S. Agnes, were all cured. The sayd holy virgin was entered att S. Damian, but afterward was transported into the Church of S. George, wher she still remaineth together with her siter in Alsifium; by the which Church the Cittizens haue builded a faire monastery entituled S. Clare, whither were afterward remoued the Religious sisters of S. Damian: which was don to preuent many inconueniences that might arriue vnto them, being without the Citty. The said Religious brought from S. Damian many Reliques, and particularly the Crucifix which spake to S. Francis, att the beginning of his conuersion, which is extant in the sayd monastery of S. Clare: and the Friere Minors are att S. Damian.

Of many miracles that almighty God wrought by the merittes of S. Agnes.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

A Girle of Perusia had a cancred fistula in her throat, who hauing deuotion to S. Agnes, visited her sepulcher. The Religious there hauing vnbound her soare, att the entry of the Couent, and then hauing with a strong faith offered her prayers, she arole sound, and retourned to her house exceedingly comforted, yelding thanckes to God and to his seruant.

There was a Religious sister att our Lady of Angels, of Perusia, who had a mortall soare in her brest, which the Physitions had iudged to be incurable; in it there were three holes, so that the Religious women exhorted her to beare this affliction with patience as proceeding from the hand of God, and to conforme her selfe to his will. This diseased sister being alwayes of minde to recommend her selfe to S. Agnes, kneeling one day before the Altare, she with much deuotion commended her to the holy seruant of God, demanding of her redresse of her infirmity. Wher withall falling into a gentle and sweet slumber, S. Agnes appeared vnto her, and with her hand touched her mortall wound, with which visitatiō she was sweetly comforted and cured: & at her awaking finding her selfe sound, she gaue infinite thanckes to God and to her aduocate S. Agnes.

An other Religious womā of the monastery of Venise, had an impostume in her brest, which was opened by the Physitions & found to dangerous, that they allotted her a very litle time to liue. This poore wretch therefore in this distresse, recommended her selfe to the two sisters S. Clare and

and S. Agnes, and about mindnight these to SS. as most skilfull Phisitions brought boxes of most precious oyntmentes, and accompayned with many virgins entred into the infirmery, where this sick sister was, which was leene by many Religious, and drawing neere to her bed, S. Clare sayd vnto her: Sister I am assured that you shalbe cured by the power and goodnes of God, and by the merittes of S. Agnes. The sick Religious not knowing who spake vnto her, douhted of this reuelatiō: and the sainctes replyed that they were Phisitions of Alsifium. Then S. Agnes annoynted the soare with the oyntment she had brought, and so the vision disappeared, and the diseased sister was in such sort cured of her mortall wound, that no apparence remainyd therof.

An other Religious of the monastery of S. Clare in Alsifium had bin for sixteene yeares afflicted with such an infirmity, that the other Religious alwayes held her for a leापre; this diseased creature besought S. Agnes to pray to the virgin of heauen for her recovery: And this prayer being performed with a vow, the Religious was incontinently cured, and freed from all remainder of her infirmity. A Burgeisse of Alsifium had bin long time lame by a blow of a stone receaued on his foot, and being hopelesse of humane remedy, on the feast day of S. Agnes, he wēt as well as he could to her Church, and with a strong faith and deuotion fell on his knees before her Altare. His prayer being ended, he arose sound and lusty, which he recounted to many and thancked almighty God for it.

A Painter called Palmere being in a dangerous sicknesse, & by the Phisitiōs giuen ouer as dead: one night after his speech was lost, his brother expecting in his opinion, his last breathing, was exceedingly disquieted, and comming to his bed side and lamenting him as already dead, he fell on his knees, addrested his prayers to sainte Agnes, and with abundance of teares and great confidence made a vow, that if his brother by her merittes and intercession might be cured, as often as he painted her image, he would sett a crowne of gold on her head. This prayer & vow being ended, the sick party incontinently began to speake: as if he had awakened out of a profound sleep, and called for meat, and did hungerly eat, then arose from his bead, saying that two Religious women came to visit him being in his agony and reputed for dead, and that the same visitation had such force, as it left him perfectly cured as he appeared.

A woman of Alsifium had a sonne of 12. yeares age, that had an impostume in his breast, where the cancre was so encreated, that it had made it in such sort venomous as it exceeded the Phisitions skill to cure it: This woman hauing vnderstood that by the merits of sainte Agnes almighty God had cured such diseases, she commanded her sonne often to visit her sepulchre, and deuoutly to recommend himselfe vnto her: which he did,

in such sort that approaching one euening so neere her sepulcher that his mortall soare touched the same, and there falling a sleepe, he so remayned till the next morning, when awaking he found himselfe entirely cured: for which hauing thanked God and his Saint, he returned to aduertise his mother, affirming that sainte Clare and sainte Agnes appeared vnto him in the night, and that sainte Clare brought an oyntment, wherewith sainte Agnes hauing annoynted him, he was presently cured.

Of possessed personnes deliuered by the merittes of sainte Agnes, and of certaine other miracles.

THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

THere was in Alsifium a child of 12. yeares age, who being among other children, an vnknowne mā gaue him a greene beane-cod, which the boy opening, three of the beanes fell to the ground, and the fourth only he did eat, yet as soone as he came home, he vomited extremely, then began to tumble and furiously to behaue himselfe, tounring and rolling his eyes in his head, in such sort as it well appeared that he endured extreme torment: and his gesture so terrifyed them that beheld him, that they iudged him possessed: and therfore his Father & many other his kinred brought him the next morning to the Church of sainte Clare, where hauing offered their prayers for him, and inuocated the intercession of sainte Agnes, the child a litle after begā to crye and bark as a dogge, then cryed out, take heed, there are two deuills already gone out: Say an Aue Maria, & the third wilbe gone. Which being presently done, the deuill withall left the child.

A woman of Tullinium, being tormented with many wicked spirits, her Father and grand mother vowed to goe with her to Alsifium, to visit the sepulcher of S. Agnes, with faith and hope that by her merittes she should be deliuered, and so this possessed woman remayning before the sepulchre of the S. from the ninth houre till euensong, she felt her selfe freed from the deuills that possessed her: this was done on the feast of S. Francis. The kinred of this deliuered woman offered an image of waxe weighing two poundes to the sepulchre of the saint, in acknowledgement of the grace and fauoure receaued.

A man of Perusia with a continuall feiuer, had in his body an impostume, wherof the Phisitions gaue their iudgement he would in short time end his dayes. Wherefore a woman called Celiola, admonished him to recommend himselfe to sainte Agnes, and to vow the visiting of her sepulchre. Which hauing done and his prayers ended, his infirmity ended withall, being cured both of the one and the other disease; for which
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not being vngratefull, he visited the said sepulchre, and euery where preached the prayſes of the holy virgin, giuing thanckes to almighty God for ſuch a fauour.

A Religious of the Monastery of ſaincte Clare in Alsifium, had loſt the ſight of one eye, and was in danger to looſe the other. But finding that no humane application did auayle her, ſhe recommended her ſelfe to ſaincte Agnes, and the other Religious of her Monastery alſo prayed for her, who as ſhe one time prayed in the Church, ſaw a woman that came to her and ſaid: Siſter open your eye, for your ſight is recouered: and ſo opening her eyes ſhe clearly ſaw, but ſhe could no more ſee the woman that ſpake vnto her; only ſhe was aſſured that it was ſaincte Agnes, to whome ſhe had hartely recommended her ſelfe.

Vitula, the wife of Matthew du Loup, att ſainct Francis gate in Aſſifium, had a ſonne called Martin, that had a deep ſoare in his throat, and an other in his ſhoulder, both mortall, whence iſſued ſuch an offeſiue ſauour, that it was not poſſible to come neere him. Att length after many remedies had in vaine bin tryed, his mother recommended him to ſaincte Agnes, to whome hauing with a deuout hart offered her prayers, the S. one night appeared vnto her richly attyred with a diademe of gold on her head, and a branch of lilly in her right hand, and ſayd vnto her: My daughter diſquierr not thy ſelfe for they ſōne, for he ſhal be cured and deliuered from perill. Which this woman hauing heard, ſhe aroſe full of comfort, and went to the Monastery of S. Clare, and recounted this apparition to the Abbeſſe and the Religious: then ſhe heard maſſe, which being ended, the Religious ſhewed to the mother and the ſonne the ſacred Reliques of the ſainr, and at the inſtant the ſonne was cured of the impoſtume in his throat only. After that, S. Agnes appeared to him in viſion together with an other womā that brought a viol full of oyntment. S. Agnes then ſayd to the child: My ſonne, how doe you? wherto he anſwered: I am by the merittes of S. Agnes cured of the impoſtume in my throat, but that which is on my ſhoulder procureth me extreme affliction. The S. replied: I will cure this, as I did the other in thy throat: then ſhe vnbound the ſayd impoſtume, tooke of the plaſter, and caſt it on the ground, then applyed therto the oyntment which her companion had brought, and inſtantly the child was perfectly cured. When his mother came to ſee him, ſhe found the playſters on the ground, and her ſonne found and luſty, who particularly recounted vnto her the ſayd viſion, which afterward was generally diuulged: This happened in the yeare 1350.

The life of an other sainte Agnes, who was daughter to the king of Bohemia, and Religious of S. Clares Order.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

IN the beginning of this Religious Order there was an other virgin besides the precedent called Agnes, as illustrious in sanctity as in bloud, for she was daughter to a king of Bohemia, who promised her in mariage to the Emperour Federick: and this holy virgin having heard the worthy reputation of S. Clare, who then lived, by such as came from Rome and Alsifium, being inspired of God, she besought the king her Father, to giue her leaue to turne rather the celestiall, then a terrestriall Spouse. But the king knowing that he could not recall his word and that whatsoeuer excule he should alleadge to breake this mariage, the Emperour would sinisterly interpret it, he vtterly denyed her. Now the virgin hauing found the drift and cause of this denyall, assured her Father that if he would accord to what she demaunded, she would vndertake that the Emperour should condescend therunto, presuming confidently on the fauour of IESVS CHRIST. She knew well to deliuer many other allegations with so good a grace and with such perswasive tearmes, that she purchaced her Fathers consent to what she desired, without further seeking the approbation of the Emperour. Whereupon this Princeesse presently sent for certaine Frere Minors of Magnes, where they had a Couent, who comming to her did shortly after consecrate vnto God this royall plant, with many other gentlewomen of a great families of Bohemia, to whome they gaue the habitt of Religion, instructing the in the life and rule of S. Clare. The king desiring to asigne a good pensio, and to bestow on the Monastery where his daughter was a good reuenue, to supply the necessities therof, she formally withstood him, purposing to liue and dye poore, and to be maintayned by almose, cōformably to her rule, rigourously obseruing the intention of the holy Father saint Frácis & S. Clare, in the vow of pouerty, which is yet to this day in the same māner obserued in the sayd monastery, which is in Prague, the chiefe city of the kingdome of Bohemia, with frō this first foundation, layd by this holy Princeesse, hath alwayes bin furnished with gentlewmen. Now the Emperour hauing vnderstood that his promised loue had abandoned the world, he was att the first apprehension exceedingly troubled: But considering with more maturity that she had not forsaken him to take an other man, but for IESVS CHRIST himselfe, he was att length satisfied, contented and comforted.

S. Clare being aduertised of all that this Princeesse had done, and of her life

life and perfection, who also had written and expresly sent a messenger to acknowledge obediēce vnto her as to her Mother and mistresse, auouching her selfe her humble disciple, S. Clare answered her by a letter filled with much seruour and consolation, and sent her in token of amity and good will, a girdle, a vayle, a cupp of wood, and a dish wherein the S. her selfe accustomed to eat, and many like small thinges, which the holy Princeesse with great deuotion accepted. Our Lord wrought many miracles by the said Reliques, which euer afterward were kept in the sayd Monastery in very great deuotion and reuerence.

The renouyne of this Princeesse being diuulged ouer al Almanias, there were founded many monasteries of poore Religious in her imitation, which were filled with many daughters of Princes, Dukes, Earles and other great Lordes and gentlemen of that contry, who in imitation of sainste Clare and the sayd Princeesse Agnes abandoning the world and the follyes therof, espoused for eternity IESVS CHRIST, seruuing him alone in pouerty and humility. This sainte Agnes of Bohemia being illustrated by many vertues and miracles, hauing assembled an infinite number of Religious in diuers Couents, and hauing with them perseuered in all perfection of vertues, she left this transitory world to take eternall possession of her glorious celestiaall Spouse CHRIST IESVS, who honoured her and made her blessed, as he hath manifested by many miracles which he hath wrought by her great merittes & intercessions: The Emperour Charles the fourth who was also king of Bohemia, was two seuerall times deliuered from death by the intercession of this celestiaall Princeesse, and therefore att his death he enioyned his sonne Wenceslaus and successour in the Empire, to procure her canonization: But he was hindered by important and continuall troubles and affaires, that disabled him to execute the pious and iust desires of his Father.

Of many other Religious that florished primitiue in the Order of S. Clare.

THE XLI. CHAPTER.

THere was an other holy Religious of the royal bloud of Polonia called Salome, whose sanctity was manifested by diuers miracles, which God wrought after her death, she by her merittes deliuered many women from perill of death in trauell of child, many lame were restored to the vse of their limmes, blind recovered sight, and wounded personnes were cured.

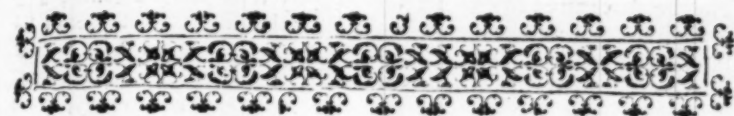
A holy Religious of Padua, called Helena, florished in great perfection of life in the monastery which was builded by the Seraphicall Father S. Francis

Francis, and in which the blessed Father S. Antony of Padua yelded his spirit vnto almighty God. This holy Religious liuing in that place, after she had there obtayned of God many vertues, she was tryed by IESVS CHRIST, and refined as gold in the furnise of afflictions. For she kept her bed depriued of all corporall force, yea and of her speech for 15. yeares, during all which time she ordinarily demonstrated by signes and gestures an exceeding great alacrity and ioy in her hart. Our Lord reuealed many thinges to this sainct, which she manifested to the Religious who curiously recorded the same to be kowne to posterity. The sayd religious sisters being demaunded how the infirme Religious could make the vnderstand those wordes, sith she could not speake, they answered that themselues then obserued so strict a silence that they scarcely spake at all, but demaunded and opened their necessities by signes, which were well vnderstood among them, for expressing whatsoeuer they desired to haue knowen. And in that sort had they vnderstood the sayd S. whose body for many yeares after, the sayd Religious sisters did shew to such as in deuotion repayred to see it, remayning entire and incorruptible, yea her nayles and haire, did grow as if she had bin liuing. By her merittes God wrought many miracles, and particularly on the Marquesse of Parma, who was of the family of Lupi called Boniface, who being in the anguish of death, the Marquesse his Lady making a vow to this sainte Helene for his health, it was perfectly restored vnto him.

In the beginning of the Order of sainte Clare, there was also of it the daughter of a king of Hungary called Cuiga, sister vnto blessed sainte Elizabeth the widowe, who hauing taken the habitt and made profession of the rule of sainte Clare, became so famous, after the death of sainte Elizabeth, in sanctity and miracles, both during her life and att her death, that question is att Rome touching her canonization.

The end of the 8. booke and second volume of the first part of the chronicles of the Frere Minors.

THE



THE NINTH BOOKE
OF THE SECOND VOLVME AND FIRST PART
OF THE CHRONICLES
OF THE FRIER MINORS.

WHERIN IS DESCRIBED THE INSTITVTION
and rule of the third Order called of penitents, made by the
holy Father S. Francis. And the liues of many of the
said Order, especially of Sainte Elizabeth,
Queene of Hongary.

*How the Order of the secular penitents was instituted by the
holy Father S. Francis.*

THE FIRST CHAPTER.



HE Seraphicall Father saint Francis sowing
ouer Italy the word and seed of life, a good
part therof fell into the hartes of men that
were bound by the knott of Matrimony,
and of personnes of such like condicion,
whose soules could not freely follow the
spiritt of penance as they desired, yet their
feruour was such, that sometimes euē whole
townes and villages were dispeopled in fol-
lowing the holy Father saint Francis, who
purchased the saluation of their soules. Whereupon this holy Father
being requested, yea importuned generally and particularly, to institute
an Order and rule wherin secular and married people might liue to doe
penance, and to liue in a more secure estate for their saluation: The
yeare 1221. he instituted the Order of Generous Penitents, whereof
all Christians that liue not in monasticall Religion might yet be mēbers.

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The first that entred this Order was an holy man called Lucius, and though no rule is found to be recorded att that time, nor forme of liuing prescribed by S. Francis, to these Penitents, yet it is most assured that he gaue them certaine rules, according to which they should temporally and spiritually gouerne themselves, were it to fast, or pray, more then other seculers, to know what office and deuotions they should vse, what almose they should giue, how they should be cloathed, and what rigour of penance they should vndertake: of which ordonances deliuered by S. Francis and recorded by them to whome he taught the same, Pope Nicolas the fourth cutt off one part, and left only that which was most easie instituting a rule, which here we will insert, which was also afterward confirmed by the Apostolicke sea, by three most ample letters patentes. And albeit the first and ancient habitt of these penitentes was afterwarde different in diuers prouinces, yet is it most probable, that the most common and general, was the same which those of the third Order yet weare in Italy, as most conformable to their statue. The colour is gray like to that of the Frere Minors; but the forme and fashion is as others seculers doe weare: and it is credible that S. Francis his will was that the sayd Penitentes should weare this habitt, such in those places where this Order was by him first instituted and where he most conuersed, this manner of habit was vsed. These sayd Penitents may not weare the cord as the Frere Minors. These of the third rule (which haue succeeded those) who liue in comon and are Religious by vow, can lesse auouch the wearing of a cord, but must vse a leather belt.

And it is to be noted that the Frere Minors cannot receaue these Penitents to the profession of Religious obedience, or to any vow but only may admitt and receaue them to the sayd rule of life and company of the Penitents, exhorting and admonishing them to obserue the same. They may also asist them in confession and other spiriual worckes as Cofreres and true Brethren of the Order. Neuertheles the Religious may not be their Prelates or Superiours, because they are subiect to secular & ecclesiasticall iurisdiction. These Penitents may yet, as is practised in all their Cofraternities, create an head or chefe by the title of Minister, Restor, or Priour, who shall haue care to assemble the Brethren att certaine times to consult of matters touching their company.

It is also manifest that S. Francis alone, among al other authors of religions, did institute and ordaine the Brethren and sisters of the third Order of Penitents. And because he had formerly instituted two rules, the one of Frere Minors, and the other of poore Sisters, this Confraternity of Penitents was called the third Order: thence is deriued their denomination. Since that time some others Orders, principally the Begging Freres endeauour to imitate S. Francis, and to institute also other

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Confraternities of imitating Penitents or what such other denomination they will, and submitting themselves in some sort to the sayd Orders, they withall enjoy their priuiledges. But to the end more apparent knowledge may be had of this first and true Order of Penitentes, instituted by the holy Father S. Francis and the holy sea, and of the fruit which they haue produced in the Church, we will proceed in declaration of this Order. First we will sett downe certaine Apostolicall fauours and concessions bestowed on this confraternity in the beginning thereof: then, the rule which the said Pope Nicolas the fourth of blessed memory compiled & approved: finally we wil deduce the illustrious personnes that haue flourished in the sayd Order in all sanctity, which wilbe a matter gratefull and worthy to be recorded.

The Brieft of Pope Gregory the ninth, whereby he declared this Order to be confirmed and fauoured by Pope Honorius the 3.

THE II. CHAPTER.

Gregory Bishop and seruant of the seruantes of God, to all the Brethren of the Order of Penitents instituted in Italy. Forso- much as the detestable enuy of the ennemy of mankind doth with greater obstinacy persecute the seruants of CHRIST IESVS, spreading his snares against them, and with all his power seeking to withdraw and remoue them from the seruice of the king of kinges, by malicious inuentions, we knowing that these hauing forsaken the vanitie of the world, though they be yet with their bodies on earth, neuertheles in soule and spirit they conuerse in heauen, renouncing worldly desires for the loue of God; they enjoy not only transitory pleasures, but eternal riches; so much more also doth he torment them, no otherwise then did the Egiptians persecute the people of God, that went out of the Egipt of this world, till they perished by diuine punishment and a new manner of death, finding & receauing the end which their workes deserved. And after our Sauour and Redeemer IESVS CHR. hauing *Matt. 4.* receaued holy Baptisme went into the desert, where hauing fasted 40. dayes and 40. nightes, the same wicked spirit feared not to tempt him. Therfor he that addisteth himselfe to the seruice of God, must according to the sentence of the Sage, prepare his soule vnto temptations. Which *Eccles. 2.* being considered by Pope Honorius the 3. our Predecessour, and that doing workes of Penance you were afflicted by the children of this world by diuers afflictions and crosses: & that therefore you had need to be nourished and fauoured by laudable workes, he embracing and louing your Religion in the bowels of IESVS CHR. gratified the same

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with speciall grace, commanding all Bishoppes and Archbishoppes of Italy to exempt and free you from such oathes as are accustomed to be exacted of Gouvernours of townes and other officers of others places: and to protest you that you be not constrained to accept publicke offices and chardges, or to be receauers of common rentes and such like affaires. But because the children of darcknes (who by their humane prudence haue learned to repute darcknes light, and light darcknes, and this by calomnie of sinister interpretation) haue so afflicted you in the preiudice of your priuiledges: that you are for more vexed and chardged then before you had those priuiledges, for albeit the sayd Officers canot exact your oathes, they find other occasions to enforce you to sweare; not permitting you to giue your reuenues in almore where you please: Wherefore you haue with great humility demaunded that we deliuer you from the obligation of such oathes as you haue made, those accepted of peace, faith, and testimony, and that you may not be chardged with impostes and contributions more then your other fellow Cittizens: & that you may employ your reuenues in pious vses, and distribute it att your pleasure, and may not be troubled for the debtes and faultes of your neighbours, but that you be obliged to answere the debtes of others for which you shalbe engaged. We then considering that you enter into the way of perfection, and that the children of the world will so much the more hinder you, as they are and know themselues different fro your holy life, and that they make a confused heape of peruerse oppositions, to hide and obscure the veritie: doe by aucthority of these present letters, giue and graunt to all you in your vniuersity (of whose faith and Religion we hold our selues assured) the permission which you demaund of vs in all the sayd matters: most expresly commanding you, that yon endeauour to vse the grace and fauour well which we bestow on you, and that none of you abuse the same: Vnlesse you wilbe frustrated and depriued of the priuiledge which we graunt you: and therfore lett none &c. Giuen at saint Iohn Lateran the 30. day of March, and second yeare of our Popedone. This present Breife was giuen the yeare of grace 1228. wherein appeareth that the Confraternity of the Penitentes was not exempted from secular or ecclesiasticall iurisdiction, though in this Breife it be tearned Religion; because this title of Religion is taken and vnderstood lardgely, for Christian Religion.

*The Brieſe of the ſaid Pope Gregory the ninth, whereby he permitted
the Penitents of the third Order of S. Francis, to heare diuine
office in time of interdiction.*

THE III. CHAPTER.

Gregory Biſhop and ſeruant of the ſeruantes of God, to the Archbiſhoppes, Biſhoppes and Prelates of the church of Italy. It being euident, that the intention of thoſe who are mindfull of death is, not to follow the vanitie of the world, but IESVS CHRIST, doing pennance with an humble hart by true contrition, chaſticing and ſubiecting the ſences to reaſon, and that their intention is to apply themſelues to the ſeruice of God: So that it were an iniuſt thing, that theſe cōfraternities ſhould be ſeparated and deſerued of the diuine offices & Eccleſiaſticall ſacraments: it being reaſonable that they receaue ſome ſpeciall fauour of the holy Apoſtolike ſea in theſe and other matters that concerne the ſeruice of God. There being then many through Italy that obſerue this order of life which ſome call Brothers Penitents, we cōmand your prudence, by this our Apoſtolick Brieſe, that in the Churches of your iuriſdiction, wherein it is generally permitted you to ſay the diuine office in time of interdiction, you doe admitt and receaue them alſo in to the Church in the ſayd time of interdiction, provided alwayes that they be not cauſe of the ſayd interdiction: the which office neuertheles ſhall not be ſayd but after expelling the interdicted and excommunicated out of the Church, the doores being ſhutt and no ringing of belles; and that you alſo admitt them to the Eccleſiaſticall ſacraments and to buriall in Churches or church yarde. Giuen at Perusia the 2. of Auguſt, and third yeare of our Popedom.

*An other Brieſe of the ſaid Pope Gregory the ninth in fauour of
the Frieres Penitents.*

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Gregory Biſhop, to the Archbiſhoppes and Biſhops of Italy. It doth too maniſtly appeare, how the clemencie of God is abuſed by ſuch as hinder or delay thoſe who withall their hart deſire and ſeek to ſerue IESVS CHRIST, in conuerting themſelues vnto him. And yet no man doubteth but they are accuſed of God, that ſpread their ambuſhes againſt the ſayd ſeruants to make them ſtumble, diſturb them by diuerſe perſecutions, as imi-

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tators of Pharo, who hauing his harte obdurate, neuer permitted the people of God to depart out of Egipt but by force of chastisement: and being departed, did not omitt to persecute them by tyrannies and cruelties, till himlesse and all his were submerged by the diuine right hand, leauing to all an example that his like deserue the like punishment; you therefore must vnderstand, that being come to the knowledge of Pope Honorius the third, our predeceffour of blessed memory, that some in your quarters, very prudently considering their end, resolu'd to doe penance in their owne howses or other where, and desirous more purely to approach vnto almighty God, they abandon the vanities of this world, and doe impose on their miserable flesh (the true daughter of Babilon) so much paine and affliction, as it would impose on their soules the true daughters of God, that by this meane the fault and punishment which they haue merited, may by his diuine Maiesty the more easily be remitted. But the Gouverners and Magistrates of the Citties and townes where they resided, not considering, that they who really serue God doe not entangle themselues with affaires and businesse of this world, wherwith the Espouse will not foule or defile the feet she hath so well washed with the teares of penance: doe, on the contrary enforce them to sweare to follow and accomodate themselues to the warres, constraining them to accept and vndertake publike offices, yea they, who the more commodiously to serue God, were retyred into obscure places in villages and hermitages, haue bin by them enforced to retourne to the citty: then haue they imposed on them new & the greatest chardges, taking pleasure to affront and afflicte those w home they ought more to honour and cherish, as the friendes of God. Wherefore our office of Pastor being to fauour such as by such resolutions & sanctity of life become the friendes of God, after the example of our sayd predeceffour of blessed memory, we by this Apostolicall Brieife, doe command your fraternities, not to permitt the sayd Penitents- besides domesticall affaires) to be without reason molested in al the afforesayd thinges, and otherlike, wherein their holy purposes may be hindered, and that you restraints their persecutors, by Ecclesiasticall censures notwithstanding whatsoeuer oppositions or appeales.

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Of an other Brieife of Pope Innocent the fourth.

THE V. CHAPTER.

INnocent Bishop, seruant of the seruantes of God: to our welbeloued children the Generall and Prouinciall Ministers of the Frere Minors of Italy and the kingdome of Sicily, health and Apostolicall benediction

tion. We with a benigne fauour doe asfist all such as being deuoutly conuerred vnto God, produce in his Church fruites worthy of penance, to deserue att the handes of God an eternall recompence. The Confraternities called the third Order of S. Francis being very remarckable among them through Italy and the Ile of Sicilie, we condescending to their iust petitions, doe by authoroty of these presents command your prudence, to appoint vnto them in time conuenient, Religious of your Order of capacity to be visitors, who instructing them in matters fitt for them to doe, shall correct and reforme them, as cause shall require, and shall chastice the transgressours, and reſtraine them by Ecclesiasticall cēſures. Notwithstanding whatſoeuer appeales. &c. Giuen att Lions, the ſitt of Auguſt, and ſitt yeare of our Popedome.

Of the authentickall institution of the first rule and forme of life of the Brethren Penitents of the third Order of S. Francis, ordayned by Pope Nicolas the 4. inserted with the said rule.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Nicolas Bishop, ſeruant of the ſeruantes of God, to our welbeloued children in our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, the Brethren & ſiſters of the Order of Penitents, preſent and to come, health and Apoſtolicall benediction. The firme foundation of Chriſtian Religio, being already grounded & built on the Mount of the Catholick Faith, the pure deuotion of the diſciples of IESVS CHRIST, boyling with the fire of charity, and by the word preached to them that liue in darckneſſe: this faith is that which the Romane Church holdeth and profeſſeth, the foundation wherof cannot ſhake for whatſoeuer tribulation that may aſſault it, nor fall, whatſoeuer violent tempeſt beat againſt it: becauſe it is the true, and right faith, without which none can be gratefull to God, nor find grace with his diuine Maieſty. It is the ſame alſo that ſheweth the way of ſaluation, and that promiſeth the recompences and contentments of eternall beatitude. And therfore the Confeſſour of IESVS CHRIST S. Francis, inſtitutor of this Order, teaching by word and example the meane to mount vnto heauen, denounced and preached the ſincerity of this faith to his children, and inſtituted this Order, willing them accordingly to make profeſſion of the Catholike Faith, to the end that they w^o faithfully obſerue the ſame walking ſecurely in the way of vertue, may meritt to be made poſſeſſors of the eternall glory, after the priſon of this preſent life.

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Of the meane to examine them that will enter into the said Order.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

ANd for so much as we are willing to asist this Order with convenient fauour desiring the augmentatation therof: we ordaine that all those who are to be receaued to the obseruation of this forme of life, shalbe formerly withall dilligence examined touching the Catholike faith, to see if they firmly confesse the sayd faith, and obedience to the sayd Church, the they may be securely admitted vnto the Order. But especially dilligent care must be had that no heretike, or suspected of heresie, and noted with infamy, be admitted to this forme of life. And if any should be receaued being knowne for such, lett him be presently discouered to the Inquisitor, that he may be punished and corrected.

In what manner they ought to be receaued, who desire to enter into the sayd Order.

THE II. CHAPTER.

WHen any one shall present himselfe to be admitted into this company, the superiour Ministers ordayned to receaue him, shall make an exact enquiery of his estate and condition, and propose vnto him the obligation of the company: and particularly restitution of goodes iniustly possessed. Which done, and he consenting, lett him be cloathed according to the Order, and lett him endeauour to satisfie his Creditors, if he owe any thing, either with ready mony or security of pledge: and lett him att length find meanes to content and satisfie them in some or other manner, and so be reconciled to his neighbour. Which being accomplished, and the yeare of probation expired, if the discreet Brethren be of opinion and hold it requisit to admitt him, he shalbe receaued on these conditions: which are, that he promise to keep the diuine preceptes, and to satisfie the statutes and constitutions wherto he shalbe bound and obliged: as also to performe the penance that shalbe enioyned him, or the punishment ordayned if he proue obstinate and a transgressour: and to obey the visitor, before whome he shall appeare if he be called, and shall submitt himselfe to his iudgement: and to all this aforesayd he shall oblige himselfe by subscription before publike Notaries; neither shall it be permitted to the prouinciall Minister to receaue any, but vpon the sayd conditions, except some

some notable considerations doe otherwise require, and that the quality of the personne presented giue iust occasion of an extraordinary proceeding. Besides, we ordaine that none may retire from this confraternity, being once entred, to retourne to the world. But we permitt him to enter into an other approved Religion. Maryed women also may not be receaued, without the consent of their husbands.

Of the forme of their habitt, and how they must be clothed.

THE III. CHAPTER.

LETT the Brethren of this company be clothed with course cloth and of meane price, of a colour neither fully white nor directly black, except the visitors find it good to dispense therein with any one for a time, and with the Counsaile of the Prouinciall Minister, vpon some iust and manifest occasion. Their cloakes and other habits shalbe as decencie requireth without cuttings, and their sleeues shalbe simple, close, and straight: the sisters shall weare a cloake and gowne or coat of course cloth also, and vnder their cloke shall weare a white or black habit, or a very long coat of linnen cloth or canuas without plaies. The sisters may be dispensed withal in the courfines of the cloth of their habits according to their need, the qualitye of the personnes, and condition of the places. They shall vse neither buttons nor girdles of silke, nor besides the said cloth, may vse any furies other then lambes skin: their purses shalbe of leather, and their girdles plaine, without any ornament of silke, neither shall they weare any thing else, forsaking, according to the behoufull counsaile of saint Peter, all other vaine ornaments of this world.

That the said Penitentes may not haunt dishonest banquettes, nor comedies, nor giue any thinge to stage-players and comedians.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

IT is forbidden to the sayd Brethren to frequent and be present at banquettes, playes, dances, and dishonest spectacles, &c to giue mony or any other thing to see such vanities: neither must they permitt any of their seruantes to giue any thing to that purpose.

Of abstinence and fasting.

THE V. CHAPTER.

LETT all the Brethren abstaine from eating flesh foure dayes in the weeke, that is munday, wednesday, friday, and saterday, if they be not hindred by necessity of sicknesse or infirmity. They that haue bin lett blood, may eat flesh three times that weeke. They also that traueile may eat flesh on the dayes permitted by the Church: it is also permissible

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to eat it on principall and solemne feastes. The dayes whereon is no obligation of fasting, they may eat cheefe and egges: and when they shall come to conuentuall houses, they may eat with other Religious what shalbe sett before them. But they must content themselves with two meales a day, except in case of necessity, trauell or weakenesse: for then this rule doth not oblige. Lett the eating and drincking of the healthy be moderate, as the Gospell teacheth vs saying: Be carefull that your hartes be not ouerchardged with surfering and drunckennesse. Lett the sayd Brethren neuer sitt downe att table, but hauing first sayd the Pater Noster and Aue Maria, and after their meale lett them say it with the ordinary graces. And if att any time they fogett the same, lett them say three for one. They shall fast all the fridayer of the yeare, if they be not hindered by sicknesse, or some other lawfull excuse. If the Natiuity of our Lord fall on a friday, they shall not be obliged to fast on that day. From the feast of Allsainctes to Easter, they shalbe bound to fast euery wednesday and friday, besides the other ordinary fastes appointed by the Church. They shalbe also obliged to fast euery day from the let of saint Martin till Christmas: and from Quinquagesima sunday till Easter, the sundayes excepted. Women with child, if they will, shalbe exempted from all corporall austerities and rigours from their time of being great, till after their churching, during which time they shalbe obliged only to prayer. Artificers that labour with the sweate of their bodyes, may make three meales, from Easter day to S. Francis day, if they know it needfull. They that are hyred labourers and haue their dyett prouided, may eat of what shalbe presented them except the friday, and other fastes commanded.

How often in the yeare they ought to confesse and communicate

THE VI. CHAPTER.

All the Brethren and sisters must be carefull to confesse their sinnes three times euery yeare, and deuoutly to receaue the Blessed Sacrament, reconciling themselves to their neighbours, & making restitution of others goods. The sayd times shalbe Christmas, Easter and Whitsunday.

That they must not weare offensive weapons.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

Lett not the Brethren weare any offensive weapons, but for defence of the Church and faith of IESVS CHRIST, or for defence of their contry, or with permission of their superiours.

In what manner the said Bre. Penitents ought to say their Canonick houres.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THe Brethren shall euery day say the canonick houres, that is Martins, with the Laudes, Prime and other houres to the Compline. The Clarke: to witt, they that can read the psalter, shall for Prime, say *Deus in nomine tuo saluum me fac.* and *Beati immaculati,* to the psalme *Le-*

gem pone, and att the other howers, the psalmes following, according to the vse of the Romane Church, with the *Gloria Patri*. And when they are in the Church they shall for Martins say the psalmes which the Priestles or Cathedrall Church doe say, att least they shall say 12. Paters, and 12. Aues, with *Gloria Patri*, as they that cannot read: and for each of the other houres 7. *Gloria Patri*, and att Prime and Compline they that can say the Apostles Creed and the psalme *Miserere*, shall adde it therunto: when they say it not att the ordinary houres, lett them say thrice the *Pater Noster*. The sick shall not be obliged to say theise houres, but as they will. They shall endeavour to be present att Martins att their parish Church in the time of sainte Martins lent, and the great lent, except some lawfull impediment excuse them.

That the Brethren who can, must make their Will.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

LETT all the Brethren that haue any substance, be obliged to consider of their estate, and within three monthes after their entry into this confraternity, to make their testament, wherein they shall dispose of their substance, to the end that none dye intestate.

How peace is to be made betweene the Brethren when occasion requirerth, and betweene strangers.

THE X. CHAPTER.

THE meane to appease quarrels & dissentions that may arise betweene the Brethré and Sisters, & to accord the, shalbe in such necessity to follow the aduise of the Ministers together with the Coustaile of the Bishop of the Diocese, if he be neere, and to proceed according to the matter and occurrences.

To whome the Brethren must haue recourse being molested against reason and their priuiledge.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

IF it happé that the Brethré or Sisters be iniustly troubled and molested against their priuiledges, by the Gouernours or other Commanders of the place where they dwell, the superiour Ministers must haue recourse to the Bishop or other Ordinaries of the places, to demandaund and follow their aduise how to gouerne themselves in such behalfe.

That the Brethren must withall possib. lity abstaine from solemne oathes.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

LETT the Brethré very carefully abstaine from solemne oathes, vnlesse they be therunto contrayned by necessity, except in cases conteyned in the confession of the Apostolike see, that is, for peace, faith caloniacion, and in giuing testimony, and also in contractes of buying, selling and giuing, where it shall appeare to be expedient. But in common talke lett them withall endeavour auoyd swearing: and if any shall inconsideratly

sideratly sweare (as it often happeneth in talkatiue personnes) calling it to mind in the examen of his conscience att night, lett them say thrice the Pater noster for such oath: and lett euery one be obliged to exhort, instruct and educate his family in the feare and loue of God.

How the Brethren ought to assemble in congregation, and of their beauiug Masse.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

All the Brethren and sisters in whatsoeuer place or citty they dwell must euery day, if they may, heare Masse, and euery mōth they shall meet and assemble in some place deputed by the Minister Rectour, to heare a solemne Masse: and there each of them shall giue an almose to the Chappelain or other elected to that end, which shalbe distributed by the Rectour Minister, among the Brethren and sisters that are in greatest necessiry, and particularly among the sick. This almose shall also be employed in the buriall and funerales of the poore deceased: and what remayneth shalbe distributed to the other poore. Some part of this almose also shalbe giuen to the Church where they asseble. And euery time that they meet, they shal endeauour to haue some good Religious to preach vnto them, who shall induce them to penance and to the exercise of charitable worckes. Lett all the Brethren be admonished to keep silence and to be attentiuē att prayer during the diuine office, especially whiles Masse is celebrated, and the word of God preached: vnlesse the common good of the confraternity otherwise require.

How the sick are to be visited, and what care must be had of the dead.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

When any of the Brethren shalbe sick, the superiour Ministers being therof in the behalfe of the sick party aduertised, they shall visitt or cause him to be visited at least once in a weeke, admonishing him touching the state of his soule, as farre foorth as they shal find it requisit. And if he be poore, they shalbe carefull to procure him what is necessary, out of the almose of the poore: And if the sick person doe dye, all the Brethren and sisters of the Confraternity that shalbe in the towne or place where they dye, shalbe presently aduertised therof, to the end they be present att the funerals: whence they shall not depart till the diuine

diuine office be ended and the body interred. The like shalbe obserued towards the sisters that are sick, and that depart out of this life. Eight dayes after the death of any Brother, all the Brethren and sisters of the Confraternity shalbe obliged, to say for their soules (the Priestes) a Masse of the dead, they that can read, 50. psalmes, and they that cannot read, 50. *Pater nosters*, with *Requiem aeternam*. Lett also be procured to be sayd three Masses euery yeare for the Brethren and sisters departed. They that can read the psalter, shall att their commodity say it entierly euery yeare, and they that cannot read, shall say 100. *Pater nosters* adding *Requiem eternam* att the end of each one.

Of the Superiour Ministers.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Lett euery Minister and other officer on whom, in this forme, order and rule of life, any office shalbe imposed, receaue the same with deuotion, and labour to execute it piously, and lett nor the sayd offices be giuen and distributed, but for certaine time, and lett no Minister Rectour be established for terme of life, butt lett there be a certaine time prefixed, which expired, lett an other be created.

How the Brethren Penitents that are faulty and delinquent, are to be visited and corrected.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

THe superiour Ministers, Brethren and Sisters of euery towne or place in time to that end appointed, shall assemble in some Monastery or Church there to make their common visitation: where their visitors shalbe Priestes of some approued Religion and of exemplate life, that they may impose on the delinquent, healthfull penance for their sinnes committed, neither lett any other be admitted to his office of Minister. And because this forme of life had its originall from the holy Father Saint Francis: We counsaile them to choose visitors and reformers of this confraternity, of the Order of Frere Minors, who shall conserue it and haue particuler care therfore. And when the Superiours or Gardians shalbe therunto required, they shall freely accept therof. This office of visitation shalbe kept att least once in a yeare, or oftener if it shalbe necessary. The obstinate, disobedient and incorrigible shalbe first admonished three seuerall times: after which, if they will not amend, lett them by the aduise of the discreet Brethren, as incorrigible persons be excluded and expelled their confraternity.

sideratly sweare (as it often happeneth in talkatiue personnes) calling it to mind in the examen of his conscience att night, lett them say thrice the Pater noster for such oath: and lett euery one be obliged to exhort, instruct and educate his family in the feare and loue of God.

How the Brethren ought to assemble in congregation, and of their hearing Masse.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

All the Brethren and sisters in whatsoeuer place or citty they dwell must euery day, if they may, heare Masse, and euery mōth they shall meet and assemble in some place deputed by the Minister Rectour, to heare a solemne Masse: and there each of them shall giue an almose to the Chappelain or other elected to that end, which shalbe distributed by the Rectour Minister, among the Brethren and sisters that are in greatest necessity, and particularly among the sick. This almose shall also be employed in the buriall and funerales of the poore deceased: and what remayneth shalbe distributed to the other poore. Some part of this almose also shalbe giuen to the Church where they asseble. And euery time that they meet, they shal endeauour to haue some good Religious to preach vnto them, who shall induce them to penance and to the exercise of charitable workes. Lett all the Brethren be admonished to keep silence and to be attentiuē att prayer during the diuine office, especially whiles Masse is celebrated, and the word of God preached: vlesse the common good of the confraternity otherwise require.

How the sick are to be visited, and what care must be had of the dead.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

When any of the Brethren shalbe sick, the superiour Ministers being therof in the behalfe of the sick party aduertised, they shall visitt or cause him to be visited at least once in a weeke, admonishing him touching the state of his soule, as farre forth as they shal find it requisit. And if he be poore, they shalbe carefull to procure him what is necessary, out of the almose of the poore: And if the sick person doe dye, all the Brethren and sisters of the Confraternity that shalbe in the towne or place where they dye, shalbe presently aduertised therof, to the end they be present att the funerals: whence they shall not depart till the diuine

diuine office be ended and the body interred. The like shalbe obserued towards the sisters that are sick, and that depart out of this life. Eight dayes after the death of any Brother, all the Brethren and sisters of the Confraternity shalbe obliged, to say for their soules (the Priestes) a Masse of the dead, they that can read, 50. psalmes, and they that cannot read, 50. *Pater nosters*, with *Requiem eternam*. Lett also be procured to be sayd three Masses euery yeare for the Brethren and sisters departed. They that can read the psalter, shall att their commodity say it entierly euery yeare, and they that cannot read, shall say 100. *Pater nosters* adding *Requiem eternam* att the end of each one.

Of the Superiour Ministers.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Lett euery Minister and other officer on whom, in this forme, order and rule of life, any office shalbe imposed, receaue the same with deuotion, and labour to execute it piously, and lett not the sayd offices be giuen and distributed, but for certaine time, and lett no Minister Rectour be established for terme of life, butt lett there be a certaine time prefixed, which expired, lett an other be created.

How the Brethren Penitents that are faulty and delinquent, are to be visited and corrected.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

THe superiour Ministers, Brethren and Sisters of euery towne or place in time to that end appointed, shall assemble in some Monastery or Church there to make their common visitation: where their visitors shalbe Priestes of some approued Religion and of exemplare life, that they may impose on the delinquent, healthfull penance for their sinnes committed, neither lett any other be admitted to his office of Minister. And because this forme of life had its originall from the holy Father Saint Francis: We counsaile them to choose visitors and reformers of this confraternity, of the Order of Frere Minors, who shall conserue it and haue particuler care therfore. And when the Superiours or Gardians shalbe therunto required, they shall freely accept therof. This office of visitation shalbe kept att least once in a yeare, or oftener if it shalbe necessary. The obstinate, disobedient and incorrigible shalbe first admonished three seuerall times: after which, if they will not amend, lett them by the aduise of the discreet Brethren, as incorrigible persons be excluded and expelled their confraternity.

THE CHRONICLES

That the Brethren must auoyd debates and contentions among themselves, or others.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

Lett the Brethren and Sisters, to their utmost, auoyd strifes, disputes debates and contentions. And when any beginning of discord doth appeare, lett them incontinently seeke to suppress and extingish the same: if not, lett the matter be brought before the Magistrate who hath auctority to iudge therof, who hearing the parties with patience, shall determine their discord by iustice.

How the Brethren may be dispencced withall in their abstinences.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

THe Ordinaries of the places, or the Visitor shall haue power to dispencc with the Brethren and sisters, touching the abstinences fastes and other austerities of this rule vpon lawfull caule, and when they shall see it expedient.

That the Ministers must discouer vnto the visitor the manifest faulces.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

THe Ministers shall aduertise the Visitor of the manifest faulces of the Brethren and Sisters, that the culpable may be punished: And if any be found incorrigible after three seuerall admonitions by the Minister, or by some of the discreet Brethren, lett him be denounced to the Father Visitor, who shall expell him the confraternity, and publish them in the congregation.

Approbation of the Pope that none of the Brethren shalbe obliged vnder mortall sinne to obserue the points aforesaid.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

BVt in al the aforesayd thinges, wherunto the Brethren and Sisters of your Order are not obliged by the commandements of God, or ordinances of the Romane Church: we will not that they be bound vnder mortall sinne: but lett them with prompt humilitey receaue the penance enioyned them for the excelle committed, and study to accomplish it entierly.

The sequell of the confirmation of this rule.

Let no man presume to dismember the page of this our decree & rule, or rashly to contradict it. But if any presume to attemp it, lett him know that therein he incurth the indignation of Almighty God, and of his blessed Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul. Giuen at the Reate the 17. of August the second yeare of our Pontificate.

The Brieft of Pope Nicolas the fourth, in fauour of the confraternity of Penitents.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

Nicolas Bishop the seruant of the seruants of God, to all faithfull to whome these presents shall appeare, health and Apostolical benediction. The only sonne of God, by whose precious woundes we haue

bin redeemed and rescued in the fountaine of his precious blood, founded and instituted the holy Church on the rock of faith instantly after his birth, and committed the iurisdiction and power of his celestiall empire to the blessed Prince of the Apostles and porter of eternall life, giuing to him and to his successors, principality and power to bind and loose the dispeaced of Israel, that by the mystery of his passion are retyred into his fold. And therefore the soueraine Romane Bishop successour of the same principallie of those principall watches and carefull diligences, and not of studies and desires filled with vanities, is charged by Apostolicall obligation, that the Church alwayes multiply with a new generation and race, to be vnited to the well-disciplined flock, because the condition of humane nature is easily broken or dissolved (as an earthen vessel that is subiect to fragility) and with difficulty reformed. And therefore it is necessary for the faithfull of the same Church, to haue especiall care, as hauing bin diligently educated in the innocencie of sincerity and verity, not to deface and corrupt the doctrine and constitutions of the Successour of the same Prince, or in whatsoeuer manner by wordes of murmure to hinder the same: for as the Apottle saith: He is contrary to the Ordinances of God that resisteth his power. Sith then the holy seruant of God and singuler Confessour of IESVS CHRIST S. Francis, enflamed with the burning fire of charity, disciple both in wordes and workes of the glorious Apostles, aduancing himselfe with a spirit full of verity, to augment the family in the house of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, with intention to reduce into the way of saluation the feet of such as walked in darknes, instructing them without learning, he hath instituted an Order with the title of Penitents, to whome he hath giuen meane to meritt eternall life. We desiring to fauour the sayd Order, to the end the intention and zeale of the sayd Confessour doe encrease in vertues, and that the Professours of this Order by meane of our care, make good progresse in the way of their saluation: It hath seemed vnto vs requisite, approuing the sayd Order, that therein be performed certaine ordinances worthy to be obserued, as most behoufull, which by our letters we haue to that end perscribed vnto them; and among others, where we counsaile and with a Fatherly affection admonish the sayd Brethren Penitents, to follow and oblerne the sayd rule and forme of life: and that so doing, they with perfect charity by meane thereof consente a mutuall vnion and affection. Naturall reason and duety requiring, that for reuerence vnto this holy Confessour, the Professours of the sayd Order be conducted and guided by the doctrine and counsaile of the Frere Minors, the sayd Saint hauing bin institutor of these Orders: and therefore lett them procure to haue of the Frere Minors

to be

to be Visitors and reformers of the sayd Religion: And for so much as some of the sayd Order (which is lamentable) by their peruerie will, being doubtles illegitimate children, yea bastardes of the Church and of this holy Confessour of IESVS CHRIST, doe rebell against this our permission and counselle, and haue presumed to affirme and maintaine that the Religious receauing and obseruing that rule cannot be saued therin, and are so temerarious as that without any feare they attempt to peruert, and att least doe persecut thé that desire to follow our sayd counsaile: We therefore determining not to lett this presumption with continuence to passe vnpunished, doe totally annull the processe made, or to be made against thole that follow our counsaile; and will that all they who with reuerence accept and follow our sayd behouful counsaile, doe participate of the grace of the Church and of our benediction, and doe enioy the priuiledges graunted to the same Order of Penitents by the holy Apostolike sea, or to be graunted hereafter. We further ordaine, that they who shall resist or hinder so holy a constitution, be in such sort restrained by the Ordinaries of the places, that they enforce them to desist from their turbulent impedimentes: Notwithstanding whatsoeuer priuiledge, or vnder whatsoeuer forme of wordes, obtained to the contrary, and lett the Brethren Penitents that shall follow our sayd healthfull counsaile, haue Ministers taken and elected among themelues, according to the forme containyd in the sayd rule. Giuen att Ciuita Vezia the 8. day of August the thid yea: e of our Pontificate.

*The life of S. Elizabeth the Widow, daughter to the king of Hungary,
and of the third Order of S. Francis.*

Of the Innocencie and vertue of S. Elizabeth in her most tender youth.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

THis blessed S. the daughter of king Henry of Hongary was royally educated in her Fathers house: but being by diuine grace illuminated, and opening the eyes of hir natural knowledge, she timely began to misprize the vanities of the world and the apprehensions of youth, chaunging them into desires to serue God. And from five yeares old she continued and perseuered in prayer in the Church, with such mature grauity and such repose, that her Gouvernesse had much labour to withdraw her thence. And therefore she was often constrained to find occasions to goe into her chappell att accustomed howers, where she would spend such time as she could, and make her prayer prostrate on her bare knees, vsing all industry to induce her waiting ladyes to doe the like,

like, and to pray, read psalmes, and be deuout and honour the saintes. She so vsed the matter that she drew a spirituall fruit out of the very playes and pastimes that her Ladyes vsed: for she obliged those that lost, to lay certaine Paters Nosters and Aue Maries, or to giue such a somme to the poore. And as her yeares encreased, so did also her deuotion, purity and zeale in all vertues, choosing the sacred Virgin Mary for her Advocate and S. Iohn the Euangelist for the Guardian of her innocencie, to whome she was so specially deuoted, that she denied nothing, which being in her power to giue was demaund for his sake. She had her spirit so eleuated, that she tooke occasion of euery matter presented, to stirre her selfe to deuotion, in such sort that when she was constrained to be present att assemblies of magnificence and sportes, she would often, in the middelt of the greatest pleasure and contentment that could happen therin, leaue the company: which she would doe so dexterously and prudently, that it much edified all that were present. She was cloathed very decently and modestly, and did eat temperarly: and then cauted to be giuen to the poore (which then attended for such almose att her dore) the rest of the meat prepared for her: she would be present att the diuine seruice with great reuerence and deuotion. Whiles the Gospell was read, and att the eleuation of the most sacred Host, she would put off her gloues, iewels, and other precious ornaments of her head, and lay them on the ground, for greater reuerence to almighty God. She neuer omitt'd her ordinary prayers and pious exercises, and sometimes would watch a good part of the night, to satisfie the omisions and employments of the day.

Of S. Elizabeths perseuerance in vertues after she was marryed, of her pious behauiour, and of her patience in her afflictions.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

THis heroicall Lady being eleuated and nourced in these pious exercises, she by diuine inspiration entierly resigned her selfe to whatsoeuer it pleased God to ordayne and dispose of her: for albeit she had resolued with her selfe neuer to haue other Spouse then **IESVS CHRIST**, yet did the diuine providence otherwise ordayne: for so much as her Father to whome she was most obedient, enforced her to mary Lantgraue, Duke of Toringe, of the greatest Princes and of fairest posselsions of Germanie; disposing this marriage for the extreme necessity that the Toringians had (being halfe barbarous) of some one to excite them to the loue of God, and to the practise of charitable worckes towards their neighbour, and worthy merittes of the

vertue of chastity . This holy princeſſe found much trouble with her husband the firſt yeare, not that he wanted ſufficient inclination to vertue, but by reaſon of the ill diſpoſition of thoſe of his counſaile, and of ſome particuler ſeruants and domeſticall officers of his, who interpreted and reputed the great humility of this worthy Princeſſe, for ſottiſhnes and want of ciuility and Courtlie complements: and therefore did contemne and perſecute her to their vtmoſt. But by her continuall prayers ſhe obtrayned of God many particuler graces, and namely that her husband ſhould not only not hinder her holy exerciſes, but ſhould be very ioyfull, the which incontinently came to paſſe. For being replenished with the feare of God, he permitted her ſecretly to doe whatſoeuer ſhe thought to tend to the ſeruice of his diuine Maieſty, comforting her ordinarily in the diſguſtes and diſcontentments that ſhe might fall into by the ſubtility of the deuill in ſpirituall life, and by ſweet wordes encouraging her for the good of her ſoule: In ſuch ſort that albeit this holy Princeſſe had chaunged her eſtate, yet did ſhe not deſiſt from her pious exerciſes and holy intentions, alwayes vſing very rigorous penance, afflicting her body by diſciplines watchinges and abſtinences, and did alſo very often ariſe from her husbands bed, and ſpent the reſt of the night in prayer vnto God. And if ſometimes ſleep did ouercome her, ſhe would only make vſe of a pillow on the ground to ſleep on. And when her husband was from home, ſhe would employ the whole night in prayer, in the company of her celeftiall Spouſe. She ſecretly woare a haircloth, and very often vſed diſciplining to conſorme her ſelfe to her Sauour, that would be ſo cruelly ſcourged for vs. She was ſo ſeuere in her abſtinence, and kept it ſo perfectly, that in the middeſt of banquettes, of the abondance and delicacie of the moſt exquisite diſhes, ſhe would often content her ſelfe with only bread, and would entertaine thoſe that were with her att table with caruing and preſenting meat vnto them, to the end they might not obſerue her, but might thinck ſhee did eat indifferently of euery diſh. Becauſe ſhe tooke no pleaſure to behold ſo much good meat, ſhe would often ſend to a poore yet vertuous ſeruant of hers for ſome of his ordinary dyer. whereon ſhe would feed. Her husband obſeruing all theſe thinges did tolerat them with an extreme admiration and deuotion, and would ſay, that he would willingly doe the like, but that it was neceſſary for him to conſerue his houſe and eſtate.

Of the prayer, humility, pouerty, obedience and forgetfulnes of iniuries, of S. Elizabeth, and of the reuelation which God made vnto her of the remission of her sinnes.

THE X. CHAPTER.

THis vertuous woman was so feruent in prayer, that she neuer prayed without weeping, and yet in such sort as she kept it vnknowne. In her prayer she felt both sorrow and ioy in her soule: she would say that to weepe with force and heauinesse was to shew an euill countenance vnto God. It once happened that being according to her custome in prayer, her hart, eyes and handes eleuated towards heauen, her soule was so rapt and swallowed vp in God, that burning coales falling on a fold or plait of her gowne, burned a good part therof she not perceiuing it, and had burned yet farther, if one of her seruantes passing by, had not hastily extinguished the same: in doeing wherof she cryed so loud that she caused the pious lady to retourne to her selfe, who with her owne handes sett a piece on that part of her gowne which was burned. She would not haue her seruantes and the poore people to cal her Lady, but would couerse with them as their equall causing them to sitt by her, and eating, spinning and working with them without any ceremony. She so affected humility, that she disdayned not or omitted the basest occurrence for the loue of God. In the middest of the greatest prosperity that she euer had, she alwayes desired the estate of pouerty, to imitate and follow that of IESVS CHRIST in this life, shunning all pompe and worldly glory. By this fauour and holy desire, she would often being alone in her house with her friendes and seruantes, cloath her selfe poorly, affirming that if she fell into pouerty, she would in that sort be cloathed. She would be alwayes present att generall procesions and litanies, bare foot, and attyred in linnen, and with great humility would heare the sermons among the simple people. When she went first to Church in the morning, she would not goe attyred according to her quality, but the most simply she could, in example of the Virgin Mary, carying her child in her armes and laying it very reuerently on the Altare, there offering a lambe and a candell. Retourning home after the seruice, she would giue the cloathes she wore att masse to some very poore woman. And the more perfectly to obserue the rule of humility, she promised obedience in that concerned the good of her soule to her Cōfessour M. Courard a poore Religious, but of great piety and doctrine, whose counsailes, though generally vertuous,

she so strictly obserued, as if IESVS CHRIST himselfe had commanded her. By this obedience and vpō a scruple of her conscience she would neither touch nor vse any thing bought with the mony arysing of any gaine made by the Officers of Lantgraue her husband, fearing that it might be gotten of the blood of the poore subiectes. And albeit the same were lawfull and permissable to that saint, in regard of the simplicity of those times, yett att this present it may not be done nor permitted to any.

*To pray
for ones
enemies
is very
pleasing
vnto
God.*

Hauiing in her widowhood receaued a great iniury, which exceedingly troubled and disquieted her, she fell to her prayers, and began with great abundance of teares to pray vnto God for those that had done her iniury, beseeching him to bestow on each of them a grace whereby they might receaue some consolation of his diuine Maiesty. During the seruour of this prayer, she heard a voice that sayd vnto her: thou hast neuer presented a prayer vnto me more gratefull then this, which hath thorough-peared my bowels. Wherefore I pardon thee all thy sinnes, and giue thee my grace. This holy Princeesse knowing the mercy which God had shewed her, considered with her selfe, what courie of life she might thenceforward vndertake to become more gratefull to his diuine Maiesty, and to serue him more dilligently. But being in deep consideration herevpō, the ineffable searcher of hartes sayd vnto her: hope in God, doe good worckes, and shunne sinne, & thou shalt alwayes haue cōfort.

Of the deuotion of this S. towarde the Frere Minors, and how, doubting of the loue of God towarde her, he miraculously displaced a tree, and replanted it where she desired.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

THis blessed lady was both a singuler mother and daughter vnto the Frere Minors, as one replenished with the spiritte of pouerty and contempt of the world, wherof they made profession: & therefore hauiing bin many dayes without the sight of any she was exceedingly melancholy. Her husband perceauing that she was more sad then of custome, asked her the cause: wherto she answered, that it was because she had not in a long time seene any seruant of God, nor of them heard the word of his diuine Maiesty: And therefore was she so heauy and melancholy both interiorly and exteriorly. Which her husband vnderstanding, he presently sent for Frere Minors to comfort her: who being come she presently resumed her former serenity and mildnes of countenance, and a long time discoursed of the estate of her loule with one of them who was her spirituall Father, and among o-
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ther thinges thus spake vnto him : Father, that which most afflicteth my soule, is when I consider my finnes to deterue that I be litle loued of almighty God, sith I continually strue with my utmost ability to loue him; and yet I much feare that he reiecteth me as vnworthy his presence and his loue. The Religious therupon assured her that she was farre more beloued of God, then he could be of her. Wherto the Sainct replied: If it were so, my God would not permitt me to be separated from him one only moment, but would ordinarily visit me with some sicknesses or afflictions, which I desire, and would exceedingly effect for the loue of his diuine Maiesty. This good Religious by very pregnant reasons demonstrated vnto her, what and how great is the loue of God towards his creature, and how much it exceedeth ours, in that his loue is infinite, eternall, strong, pure, and entier: and ours is slender, temporall, feeble, impure, and imperfect. But this Religious discoursed to litle purpose: for the vertuous lady could not beleue him, and therefore, shewing him a tree on the other side of a riuer whereby they were, she sayd: Father I would rather beleue that the tree which you yonder see could remove hither, then beleue my selfe to be more loued of God then I loue him, being as I am att this present separated from the sweetnes of his true loue. The sequell was most admirable, for those wordes were no sooner spoaken, but the tree was dis- planted by the rootes and transplanted on the side of the riuer where they were. This Princeesse then remayning as it were in extasie, experienced in her soule how much the loue of God exceedeth ours, and so she acknowledged her selfe to be vanquished by the loue of God.

God infinitely
surpasseth vs
in loue.

*Of the great charity of this holy Princeesse, and how she spent her time in
workes of mercy.*

THE XII. CHAPTER.

THe liuely waters of the workes of mercy did continually flow out of this fountaine of diuine loue, wherewith the poore of IESVS CHRIST were refreshed, who saith that he will accept the said workes as done vnto himselfe. This Princeesse was extremely sparing and frugall in what was for her owne vse and particuler necessities: but exceeding liberall towards to poore, whome she could not endure to want any thing necessary vnto them: for which vertue the people called her the true mother of the poore, who in regard of this her piety, would often inuite her to be God mother to their children in baptisme; wherunto she would voluntarily accord, to haue no occasion to asist the and to procure the education of their children.

D d d d ;

She

She one time gaue one of her gownes to a poore woman, who with this almost thought her selfe rich, and concealed therof such an excessive ioy, that att the instant she fell as dead to the ground. And this compasionate Princesse hauing prayd for her, she returned to her selfe. She earned mony by spinning and sowing with her maydes, which she distributed to the poore. She also employed her selfe in that exercise, to giue example of humility vnto her women and maydnes, and to shunne idlenes. Her husband being in Italy, there happened in her territories an extreme famine, for reliefe wherof this pious woman gathered together all her reuenues, then got a note of all the poore of the City, & relieved them therewith. An other time wanting mony for the like supply, she sold her iewels, and with the price therof, releued the needy. She would often times withdraw thinges necessary, from her selfe, her women and maydes, to supply the necessity of the poore. She cauted an hospitall to be builded att the foot of her castell, which was very high, where she placed all the poore sick people, and euery day went downe to visit them, albeit the discent was very troublesome and difficult, and releued their necessities, exhorting them to patience and to purge their soules by confelsion and communion. She serued, attended, and dressed them withan exemplar humility, supporting with an extreme patience, the loathsomes that issued out of their soares, and sometimes hauing no other linnen att hand to make them cleane, she would putt off her coife & disfurnish her head to dry and wipe off the filthy matter of the said soares, which so strongly sauoured that her Ladies could not endure them.

Of the death of the Duke her husband, and of many afflictions which she endured in her Widowhood.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

OVr Lord had by his grace and by the prayers and petitions of the Duchesse, couerted the Lâtgraue, so that albeit he were by the affaires of his estate and his possessions exceedingly hindered from the seruice of God, yet did he not omit to haue good desires and with his utmost put in practise good worckes. But becaule he could not persist in spirituall exercises, he permitted his wife to employ her selfe therein for the honour of God and the benefitt of both their soules. And this vertuous woman desiring her husband should employ his forces, in defence of the Catholike faith, she induced him to visit the holy land, and to assisist the Christians in recovery thereof. He then to this effect hauing with his troupes for so laudable an enterprise aduanced his iorney so far as Italy, rested att Brindes to attend

tend conuenient time and weather to take shipping: But it pleased God that he ther fell sick of a mortall infirmity, so that he shortly after with an exemplar contrition, yelded his spiritt vnto God. S. Elizabeth being aduertised of his death, receaued her widowhood with almost the like wil as she had don her mariadge, resolving to apply her selfe entirely to the seruice of her celestiall Spoule. And so almighty God began to visit her with greater afflictions, as hauing a soule more free, and was a little more sublime, then euer. For as soone as the death of the Lantgraue was diuulged, she was by his kinred and vassalles expulsed her palace, as if she had bin a prodigall waster of the reuenue of her estate: and was so abandoned, that the night following (as a reiected creature) not knowing where to repole, she retyred in to a cottage employed for the shelter of beastes. There she ioyfully gaue thanckes to God for her misfortune, which she reputed as a great fauour and most singuler grace. The next morning, she repayred vnto the monastery of the Frere Minors, and prayed the Religious to sing *Te Deum laudamus* in thanckes-giuing to God, for that according to her desire he had afforded her the estate of pouerty. After that she ordered her children to be disposed into diuer's places, to be instructed and educated according to their quality and degree, hauing no meane to retaine them any longer with her, many iniuries and affrontes being imposed on her by the kinred of her deceased husband in his vassals, which she ioyfully & with inuincible patience supported as a fauour sent her by almighty God: An archibishop that was her vnckle caused her no small affliction, in that seeing her yong and reduced to such pouerty, he resolved to bestow her honorably in mariage. But the espouse of IESVS CHRIST, hauing layd a firme resolution rather to dye then to mary againe, obtrayned of God by meane of prayer, the victory in so strong a conflict. Whiles she honorably remayned in a castle of her vnckles, the body of her husband was brought from Brindes, which was receaued by the sayd Archibishop with a very solemne troupe and procesion of the Clergie, and accompayned by the sayd Princeesse with many teares, she thus speaking vnto almighty God: I giue thee infinite thanckes, O soueraine Bounty that it hath pleased thee to comfort me with the receipt of the bones of my deceased husband thy seruant. Thou alone knowest my God, how much I loued him, because he loued and feared thee. And neuertheles thou knowest also what consolation I haue receaued of his death, being depriued of his presence, euen for thy loue, in that he went to serue thee for the recovery of the holy land: and albeit I receaued an exceeding contentment to liue with him, yet was it with condicion that we both together might trauell as poore beggers ouer the world:

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But sith that may not be, thou knowest my God, that if it were in my power to restore him to life, I would not doe it, nor were it requisite for me to employ therein one haire of my head, if I thought it not thy holy will. But I recommend his soule and mine to thy diuine clemencie. The king of Hongary hauing vnderstood the death of the Lantgraue his sonne in law, and the miserable estate of his daughter, and with what impiety she was persecuted by the subiectes of her husband, he sent one of the principall Earles of his kingdome, to bring her vnto him: who hauing sought her, found her spinning of wooll among very poore women, wheratt he to admired and was so grieued, that he began to breake out into exclamations, regrets and complaints: and at length deliuered his charge, aduertising her of the will of her Father. But in vaine did he strue to perswade her to retourne to her contrytor: she as a generous Princesse, choie with the Prophett Dauid, rather to liue abiected with the poore in the house and seruice of God, then honoured in royall delighes, and in the palace of terrestriall Princes.

2^d 1. 83.

Now S. Elizabeth became religious, and founded a great hospitall for the vse of poore sick people.

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

THis blessed widow had vowed that if she ouer-liued her husband, she would spend the rest of her dayes in perpetuall chastity, obedience and pouerty, which she failed not with much seruour to accomplish; and therefore she toke the habitt of the Penitents of the third Order of S. Francis, and being clothed in a coat and cloke of grosse gray cloth, all patched with sackloth, she promised obedience to her Confessor called Fa. Courad, a Religious of notable sanctity, which she most exactly obserued, euen in woorkes of penance, as fastes, disciplines, and other mortifications, in which vertues this holy Religious man did exercise her for the greater benefitt of her soule. And to the end she might enuierly deliuer her hart in possession vnto God, without being distracted or hindered by any temporall affection, she bestowed his diuine maiesty to settle in her hart such a milprile of al temporalities, as might depriue her euen of her loue to her children, and giue her force, to support all the iniuries of this life. Arising from this prayer, she went and thus spake to her companions: Know ye, that almighty God hearing my prayers hath graunted me, that henceforward I shall neuer esteeme all the magnificences, amities, and other deceitfull allurements of the world, more then filth, yea neither shall I haue any care
of my

of my children, more then of my neighbours, to the end I apply my loue to nothing but his diuine maiesty. After she had taken the religious habitt, she with greater seruour addicted her selfe to prayer, as also to workes of mercy; and hauing receaued 2000. Marckes of mony as part of her dowry, she gaue the greatest part therot to the poore, and with the rest builded an honorable and commodious hospitall, to entertaine poore sick people, and there to haue them cherished, attended and medicined: wherein her selfe, as the most humble seruant, serued the poore sick creatures, yea with such charity as she washed their feet, and made their beddes: and then would say to her companions that assisted her: we haue this day receaued a great fauour of God in that we haue washed, couered and serued him, sith it is he whome we serue in his poore people. She relieved and assisted with such great seruour and humility, that in one night she carryed a poore blind and very sick boy, six times to his necessities, albeit he was euery where full of filth and loathsomnes, and then ioyfully washed the linnen that he had fouled. There was in this hospitall a leproesse, whome she often purified, though she were so couered with filth and leprosie, that one could not so much as behold her without horreur. But this Princesse did handle her as if she had bin very cleane, dressed her meat, gaue it her to eat, and applyed her medicins, pulled off her hols, and pared her nailes with such promptitude as she procured a strang admiration in all the beholders: She caused the sick ordinarily to confesse and communicate: and in like case a poore old and sick woman, that had no will to confesse, was by her corrected and made confesse. She washed and shrouded the dead bodyes with her owne handes, and with very great deuotion attended them to buryall. Our Lord by many miracles which he wrought by this blessed lady, made appeare how gratefull this worck of mercy was vnto his diuine maiesty.

What order S. Elizabeth obserued, and the miracles she wrought in the said Monasterie.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Sainte Elizabeth in her hospitall ordayned, that no poore person should be admitted without being formerly confessed, because a man in mortall sinne doth not deserue att the hardes of God, the bread he eateth. It one time happened that a blind man demanded entertainment in the sayd hospitall, but because he would not confesse, he was not admitted: wherefore retourning he murmured, blasphemed and rayled for that he was reiected thence. But being charitably reprehended

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and admonished by this vertuous Lady and a Frere Minor, he was conuerted and very deuoutly confessed his sinnes, and then was admitted into the hospital, where being, the Religious man sayd to S. Elizabeth: Sith you haue receaued the blind man, and haue giuen him to eat, you must also if you please, restore him his sight. The S. as one full of humility, answered: Father that which you require is a worck of importance, and such as none but God can doe, as he alone that illuminateth the blinde: but sith it hath pleased his infinite bounty so mercifully to graunt him the light of grace, I shalbe glad that he vouchsafe him that of his eyes. And therefore Father, obtaine you of his diuine maiesty the light of one eye, and I wil endeaour to pray for the other. And so both of them with great confidence and seruour falling to their prayers, the sight of one eye was restored to the blind, and a litle after, the other. Wherin God shewed the difference of the meritts of the intercessors, in that the sight restored to the second eye, was very much clearer, purer, and sharper then the other.

The saint one day entring secretly into the hospitall with two seruants to visit the sick, she found att the dore a paralytique sying on the ground, who was also deafe and dumble. She hauing compassion of this poore creature, asked him with a low voice what he ayled. The sick man that could not yeare her, moued his head and mouth as one dumbe; and making signes with his handes, the seruant of God with seruour of the holy Ghost sayd vnto him: I command thee in the name of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, to tell me where is thy grieve: att which worde the paralytique arose on his feet and sayd: I haue bin for many yeares both dumbe and lame, as you see, and this is the grieve I had. This saint vtterly amazed att such a miracle, speedily retourned whence she came, to auoyd the notice and obseruation of the world.

As she went an other time to visit the sick, it happened that she saw one so much decayed, as by reason of his extreme weaknes he could not eat. The S. prayed him to tell her what he desired to eat. The sick creature sighing answered her, that he could willingly eat of some fresh-water fish: the vertuous Princesse, assuring him to procure it for him, left him much comforted, and presently lent a seruant of the hospitall to gett such fish for the sick man. But retourning he aduertised her that the riuer being frozen, there was no meane to haue any. Which this compassionate mother of the poore vnderstanding, hauing confidence in God, and being well instructed by the holy Ghost, tooke a bason in her hand, and went incontinently to a fountaine close by the hospitall, wherinto hauing dipped her bason she drew it out full of water and fish, which with great pleasure she boiled, and gaue to the sick party that was halfe dead, who did eat with such appetite,

that

that a litle after he arose from his bed sound, and gaue thanckes to almighty God.

Of the contemplation of S. Elizabeth, and how she deliuered her mother out of Purgatory, and conuerted a very sensuall yong man.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

THis holy Princeſſe had ordinarily reuelations and viſitations of her beloued IESVS CHRIST, by his moſt ſeruēt loue whei with ſhe was wounded. Being in the Church one day in the lent, ſhe ſo ſetled and fixed her eyes on the altare, that ſhe made it appeare that ſhe there ſaw the preſence of the diuine maiesty, to remayning many howers receauing celeſtiall reuelations. Retourning to her ſelfe, ſhe was cōltrainyd by ſo great weaknes to reſt her head on the lappe of one of her ſeruantes, and ſo remayning a while, ſhe began to behold the heauen at a window, diſcouering ſuch a ioy in her countenance, that it enforced her to breake out into a merueillous laughter: and a litle after this laughter tourned into weeping, then againe opening her eyes ſhe ſhewed the like ſignes of ioy as before, and ſhutting them ſhe began againe to weep, thus continuyng without ſpeech till Compline. And then ſhe began to ſay. O my God: if thy holy will be to remaine with me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee to beleuee that I affect not nor deſire any thing more paſſionately then to remayne eternally with thy diuine maiesty. Her companiōs hauing prayed her to tell them for the glory of God and the edification of their ſoules, what ſhe had ſeene, ſhe ſayd: my beloued ſiſters, I haue ſeene heauen open, and my Lord IESVS CHR. benignely bowing vnto me, & ſhewing vnto me his holy gracious countenance. Whiles I beheld him, I was filled with incompreheſible ioy, but not ſeeing him I was oppreſſed with inſtitimable griefe: therfore did I ſo bitterly weepe. And therfore God hauing compaſſion of me he againe cōſorted and reioyced me with reſonitrance of his glorious face replenished with ineffable ſplendour, who aſking me if I would remayne with him, I anſweared as you haue heard. Her companions further prayed her to impart vnto them the reuelation ſhe had a litle before being before the altare. She anſweared: I may not tell you what I haue ſeene: yet I tell you I ſaw a merueillous matter of almighty God, & my hart was filled with his ioyful & gracious viſitation. This S. was ſo viſited of God in diuers manners, though ſhe reuealed nothing to her cōpanions therof, nor what ſhe knew to be the wil of God, who loueth the ſecrecy of his friendes. Our Redeemer would manifeſt the ſeruēt charity of this bleſſed S. hearing her prayers by diuers effects, wherof we will heere record the two examples following.

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It happened one night as she slept that her mother appeared vnto her in vision, on her knees in this sort entreating her: alas my daughter, remember the paines I endured in thy birth, and pray for me, for thou must know I suffer extreme torment for hauing liued too negligently, & not done penance for my sinnes. The S. with this complaintiue voice awaking, and touched and moued with compaſſion towards her mother, she fell on her knees and made her prayer to God, demanding mercy of him for her mother. And after a long and feruent prayer she fell a sleep, and an other time saw her mother in vision with a ioyfull countenance, who sayd: My daughter I am by thy prayers, deliuered of the paines wherwith I was tormented in purgatory, and am now goeing to heauen.

This saynt seeing a yong man very sensuall and full of vanity, had pittie of him, and prayed for him, whome also she perswaded to pray to God for himſelfe, wherto he accorded. So whiles they both prayed, the yong man began to cry out: Madame, pray no more for me: pray no more, forbear if you please. Which the S. hearing, she redoubled the feruour of her prayers, and the yong man began againe to cry lowder: Madame, pray no more for me, I am all burned: which exteriorly appeared: for all his body did smoake by the extreme ſweat wherin he was, which made him tremble, lift vp his armes, and his countenance to faile. They that found him there, touching his fleſh, could not endure their handes on it: his cloathes were al wet with the exceſſiue ſweat that bathed him, and therfore he ſtil encreaſed his cries, ſaying that he burned. But the prayer of the ſainct being ended, this extreme & viſible heat left the yong man, who retourning to the true knowledge of himſelfe, was then ſo purged and illuminated with diuine grace, that he entred into the Religious Order of Frere Minors, where he liued & died piously: and ſo God ſhewed the force and vertue of the prayer of his holy ſeruant, not in theſe two examples only, but alſo in many others.

Of the bleſſed death of S. Elizabeth, and of the great miracles ſhe wrought, and how Pope Gregory the 9. canonized her.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

THe time of peregrinatiō of this holy widow being expired, our lord appeared vnto her in viſion, and very familiarly ſayd: Mine elect, come, poſſeſſe the celeſtiall habitation. In the morning ſhe related this newes to her companions: then by order ſhe receaued with an examplar deuotion all the ſacraments of the Church: after that, ſhe prepared what was neceſſary for her obſequies, and the night following turning towards a corner of the bed, they that were neere her heard a
clear

cleare voice most sweetly singing: wherupon one of her famillier companions asked her who it was that did sing there, and she mildely answered, that there was a litle bird, which by the pleasing melody of his tune had induced her to sing: then she began to cry, auoyd, auoyd, auoyd wicked spirit. So that the deuill being come to see if he could find any thing for him in this saint, vanished att that voice. And she hauing her countenance very ioyfull and her spirit by prayer eleuated vnto God, demaunded if it were not yet midnight, att which houre our Sauour voutsafed to be borne in the world, and layd in the cribbe: then saying that the houre was come when God would inuite her soule to the celestiall mariadge, she sodenly mounted vnto heaven. Her body hauing remayned foure dayes vnburyed, continued so beautifull and yelded so sweet a sauour, that it represented rather a glorious then mortall body. There appeared at that instant on the roofof the church a great nōber of birdes of strange kind, which did so sweetly sing, that they filled those that saw and heard them with extreme admiratiō: this was to make knowne the feast which was celebrated in heauen att the entertaynement of this blessed soule: her funerals were filled with great clamours; complaintes and lamentations particulerly of the poore, for the death and absence of her that loued, attended, and dressed them as amiably as if she had bin the carnal mother to them all. There repayed thither a great confluence of people that with much deuotion were present att her obsequies each one entitling her a saint and blessed. He that could gett so nere her body as to haue one of her haire or part of her habitt, esteemed it as a notable treasure. Then would our Lord make knowne the glory of this his faithfull seruant, by many miracles which by her merittes he wrought, restoring sight to the blind, curing the lame, cleansing the leprous, dispossessing the possessed, giuing also sight to one borne blind and her selfe being layd in her graue, deliuered many by her intercession from death. Wherof Pope Gregory the ninth being aduertised, & authentically assured of the miracles wrought att the sepulchre of this holy womā to whom liuing he carried a perticuler deuotion, after due and ordinarie information in such case procured, and the examen of her life and miracles effected, with the consent of al the Cardinals and Prelates of the Church that could be assembled, the sayd Pope enroled her in the Catalogue of SS. ordayning her feast to be solemnized ouer al the Catholike Church. This blessed S. departed this life the yeare of grace 1231. the 19. day of Nouēber. Certaine yeares after, her reliques being traslated, her body was found in the coffin of lead, where it was first layd in sepulture, her flesh being melted into oyle and most precious liquor, that yelded a most delicious and pleasing sauour: this oyle restored health to infinite sick people, and a very long time distilled from her sacred bones.

The life of the B. Elzearius of the third order of saint Francis, and S. Delphine his wife.

Of the sanctity, mortification, abstinence, and virginity of S. Elzearius.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

ELzearius was Earle of Arian in Prouince, no lesse generous and noble in vertues and sanctity, then eminent & famous in race & generation; for the Earles of Arian his predecessors were of the most illustrious of Prouence. This nobleman from thirteen yeares of age accustomed to fast often, and woare a coid gided on his flesh, knotted with five knotres, which he vsed as a restraint and bridle to carnall sensuality, and as a secret memory of the five woundes of our lord IESVS CHRIST. When he was ouer-wearyed with watching and was ouercome with necessity of sleep, he neuer putt of his cloathes to take his rest: and by day woare an hair-cloth, therby to feele some affliction in his body both by day and night, considering that without afflictions the fruites of spirituall desires cannot be obtayned. His rigours also serued him to repress the concupiscences & stinges of the flesh, and to obtrayne the fruites of true wisdom. His age encreasing, he addicted himselfe to a stricter rule of abstinence, chasticing his body by fastes, to subiect it vnto the spirit. He gaue vertuous and pious instructions to his family, that they might liue in the feare of God, and not iniury their neighbour, but might edifie him, and that God might by them be serued and honoured. This saint after his youth (though he had bin delicately nourished) was a great friend vnto chastity, and so continued euen to his death, preserving in his soule and body the inestimable treasure of virginity.

How saint Elzearius was marryed, and accorded with his wife, to conserue their virginity.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

S. Elzearius was marryed in his youth, vnto a gentlewoman of noble familie called Delphine, who had a like intencion with her husband to preserue her virginity. She being past twelue yeares of age, and knowing she should shortly be deliuered and committed to Elzearius her Spouse, began exceedingly to feare that notwithstanding the sanctity she knew to be in him, as not sufficiently firme and resolute in this grace, he would ouerthrow the holy resolutio she had to cōserue her integrity. And consulting therof with a Frere Minor that was her ghostly

ly Father, called Frere Philip Denguerre a man of notable piety, he gaue her full assurance and satisfaction, with a propheticall spiritt telling her, that she should not only entierly obserue her vow, but that her husband and she should liue together chastly and so perseuer to the end. And so the nuptiall solemnities being ended, they liued together twenty seauen yeares religiously and piously, vnder the shadow of the name of mariadge, very well vnited in spiritt, but remote from the vnion of the flesh, preserving in this vessell of earth, the inestimable treasure of most precious chastity, a vertue not so much recommendable as rare, and so much more worthy to be imitated, att least in part, as the contrary vice is damnable and ruinous.

Of the worthy and singuler vertues of S. Elzearius.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

THis holy man duely considering that the principall vertue which the seruant of God can haue, is the misprize of himselfe, and consequently humility, and not worldly nobility: his spiritt could neuer be raysed to vaine glory by the great substance, honours and puissance which the eminency of his house did yeld him. His wordes were gracious and pleasing conformable to the spiritt that deliuered them: and the better to attaine to the perfect contempt of himselfe, he would often, for the loue of IESVS CHRIST, wash the soares and vlcères of leapers with his one handes, and serue them with great seruour of deuotion, and with such charity, as if with his owne eyes he had seene and serued IESVS CHRIST himselfe. He behaued himselfe towards his subiectes and vassals, ouer whome he had entier iurisdiction, as a iust lord, iudgeing their causes with a seuer clemencie, as one that could not be drawne from the right course of iustice by feare, hatred, fauour or corruption. This holy man proceeded in all actions by the vertue of discretion, wherwith he so tempered his worckes of mercy, that therein he with exceeding humility auoyded worldly glory and fauour: and as a valiant and perfect warryer, he neuer desisted from his first intention: and as iust, he withall his industry shunned the occasions of offending God. This seruant was so charitable and liberall to the poore, that neuer any demaunded of him an almose for the loue of God, but he gaue him a reward together with good wordes. All his care was to feed the hungry, to lodge pilgrimes, and haue care of poore sick and forlorne creatures, as one that acknowledged the poore CHR. IES. in his poore creatures, & in sickneses, the painfull afflictions which he endured for vs miserable sinners. And as he was replenished with the loue of his neigh-

neighbours, no lesse was he, but much more replenished with the loue of IESVS CHRIST. And knowing that the edifice of vertues hath its end in the perfection of holy prayer, in regard that it is a conuersation and familiarity with God, he applyed himselfe with all his endeavour to prayer and contemplation: he also sayd the canonick houres with such deuotion and attention, as if he had bin in the visible presence of IESVS CHRIST.

How S. Elzearius had the true vertue of patience: of his death and canonization, and the death of his wife.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

THis inuincible Champion, was so armed with the precious armours of patience by the exercise of vertue, that, albeit he supported many thinges very difficult to endure, yet none could euer disquiett him: so that he was neuer perceaued to be in choler, nor the least iott remote from his ordinary mildnes. For he very patiently and humbly, supported and endured the iniuries and affrontes directly or indirectly offered vnto him, and was neuer heard to proceed out of his mouth any word but of praise and thanckes giuing vnto God: he with such sweetnes and clemencie pardonned his enemies whatsoeuer offence they committed against him, that he did not only make appeare that he was satisfied and appeased, but proceeded in their behalfe as if there had neuer bin cause of discontentment.

Being att Paris, and hauing fore-knowledge of the houre of his death, he with great abondance of teares and exceeding deuotion made his confession, then with much reuerence and in very exemplar manner receaued the sacramentes of the church. And albeit his life and the Countesse his wiues were stored withall kind of vertues, yet in his last dayes speaking of her, being vrged by the holy Ghost he vttered to those present these wordes: The infidell man is sanctified by the faithfull woman, whome I leaue a virgin in this mortall life, as I receaued her a virgin and vnspotted.

This holy Confellour of IESVS CHRIST, changed this life for a better the yeare of grace 1327. Father Francis of Maronis, a famous preacher and Doctour was present att his death. The very daye of his departure he appeared in all glory vnto his wife, (who was then in her Countie in Prouence) to whome he vttered these wordes of the Psalmist: The snare is broken, and we are deliuered, and so without any other word he vanished. The Contesse the same day recounted to all her company the death of her husband, it being the 27. day of September.

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He was buried in the church of the Cordeliers att Paris clothed in the habitt of the third Order, and the same yeare his body was translated into Prouence to the Couent of Apte, in which his sanctity was by many miracles diuulged; for which he was by the Apostolike sea canonized. His feast is celebrated the 27. of September:

The Countesse Delphine his wife, liued many yeares after him perseuering in piety: being dead she was buried by her husband, hauing the the habitt of the Frere Minors, as a discipule of the holy Father S. Francis, and of the third Order.

Att the death of this Countesse and till her body was enterred, a most sweet harmony was heard in the aire, as they haue testified and assured who were neere her body. It is piously beleueed that they were Angels singing as true friendes of virginall purity. Our Lord wrought many miracles as well in the life time, as att the death of this holy woman, and in such quantity, as there is no doubt but that our lord had canonized her in heauen.

The life of the blessed Ynes, of the 3. Order S. Francis.

Of the holy exercises and mortification of the flesh of S. Ynes.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

YVes florished in that time in the Duchy of Bretanie within the diocese of Tignier. He was a man of eminent sanctity, and led a merueillous austere life, for which cause almighty God made him famous by many miracles. This holy man was the sonne of a very rich & vertuous man, by whose good example he was from his tender infancie a patterne of commendable conuersation. His Father sent him to study humanity att Paris, thence to Orleans to study the Canon and Ciuill law, but much more did he profitt in diuine wildome: for there manifesting his doctrine he layd open to many the true knowledge and assured way of iustice. And being to retourne to his Father, the Bishop of Triquet hauing heard the fame of his excellent vertues and sanctity, made him his Officiall or commissary, with very ample authority. And albeit the holy man withall his power withstood the acceptance of this charge: yet was he att length constrained therevnto. He with such prudence *Reinave-* and without acception of persons administred iustice, that the ballance *kable* was alwayes equall; which he performed with such sincerity, that he *proceed-* would neuer receaue any recompence for it in this life. *ding in a*

A litle after by diuine providence he became Priest, in which minister- *man of* ry he offered his body a liuely sacrifice vnto almighty God. His habit was *iustice.*

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then

then, according to his quality, common, decent and modest. But vnder he woare a very sharp hayr-cloth, wherewith he afflicted his body, & did weaken it by frequēt and austere fastes & by cōtinual watchinges.

When he was admitted into the confraternity of the Penitents of the third Order of S. Francis, he reiected all his fine apparell (though most modest and plaine) which he ware according to his quality, cloathing himselfe with very grosse and course gray cloth, and wearing rude and homely shooes as poore Religious ordinarily vse. He woare vpon his hair-cloth (that it might not be seene) a shirt made of tow, raw or vndressed. He slept very litle, and then only when nature was wearyed with prayer, study or spirituall exercise, or burdened with naturall necessity of sleep: his repose was short, and he alwayes tooke it cloathed. His bed was the bare ground, a hurdle, or some grosse stickes wreathed together, his pillow the bible (an instrument of litle sleepe and of much dilligence) he being mindfull and taking comfort of these wordes of our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST: They that are clothed in soft garments, are in kings houses.

Mat. 11.

Of the abstinence, charity, prayer, and the manner of saying the diuine office, of S. Iues.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

THis holy man did neuer feed on delicate meates, but such as were very grosse: which he did to reterue of his reuēue wherewith to relieue many poore people. On fasting dayes commanded by the Church he vsed only bread and water, & ordinarily did with great abstinence fast the wednesday and saterday. He had customarily strangers and pilgrimes in his house: he was very dilligent in the practise of the workes of mercy: he enterrayned poore people, and particularly the sick and lame, with exceeding pittie and compalsion and conuerted with them so mildly and familiarly as if they had bin his brethren, he serued them and made their beddes, washed their feet, and did them all other seruices that they could need. Being no lesse carefull to administer vnto them the spirituall food of the word of God, then the corporall, he made them notable exhortations, wherein he multiplied the talent of the Euangelicall doctrine to those that were vnder his charge. He was very prompt in according dissentions and procuring of peace with all persons. He had the grace to conuert sinners to pennance. He was so addicted to prayer and contemplation, that he would sometimes neglect to take his ordinary repast and dyett. And one time he continued fūe whole dayes in prayer in his chamber, without asking or being offered

*The gif-
tes of S.
Iues.*

ferred him any thing to eat. And yet when he came forth his countenance was so pleasing, ioyful, and vermilliō as if he had bin pampered with most exquisite meates.

As he celebrated masse with great seruour, so did he therein receaue of God notable feelinges and graces, as one day did appeare: for as he eleuated the most sacred sacrament, there descended from heauen an admirable splendour and brightnes, which enuironned the sacred host together with the chalice. He red the canonicall houres with admirable attention & deuotion, and did alwayes rise att midnight to say his Matins. He diuided the office into all the houres of the dayes, in imitation of the Prophet Dauid, who prayled God seauen times in the day. *Psal. 118.*

Of the blessed death of S. Tmes.

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

THis holy Religious being complete in the perfectiō of all vertues, & exceeding deuout vnto IESVS CHRIST, very austere towards himselfe, & extreme curteous and charitable towards others, as he was by diuine grace, of a singuler life and admirable in the workes of charity, so was he honoured of God in this life by merueillous actions & miracles. For he expelled the euill spirittes out of humane bodyes, he cured all kind of diseases: Wherein was accomplished the prophesie of his mother, who confidently affirmed that, he being a child, it was reuealed vnto her that he should proue a saint.

The day of his death was reuealed vnto him three weekes before he dyed. And therupon he sayd to his people, that he was shortly by the diuine will to depart out of this life. And so the three weekes being expired being fortified with the sacraments of the Church, making a end answerable to the worth of his life, he yelded his soule vnto God the yeare, 1203. the 19. of May, & 50. of his age. His feast is celebrated the same month & day, and in some places the 27. day of October, by reason of his translation.

Of some other holy persons of the third Order of S. Francis.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

THere haue bin many other SS. of this cōfraternity of the third Order of Penitents of S. Francis, the history & particuler life of whome, would be too tedious to be inserted. And therefore we will rest cōtent with the only rehearfall of the names of such as by many

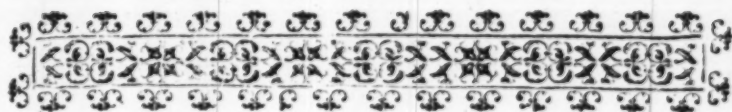
authors are recorded. Among the SS. of this Order is reckoned S. Lewis king of France, and queene Blanch his mother who was daughter to the king of Castille: The blessed Luchefius of Poggibongy whose reliques are in Tolcane, in a monastery of Frere Minors, situate on the mount imperiall, where they are exceedingly reuerenced. S. Bonne-femme, the wife of the sayd Signiour Luchefius. S. Lucius, who was the first that saint Francis receaued into the third Order of Penitents. Nicoluccius Sienos, and Iames de la Lande Priest, by whome our Lord wrought many miracles; S. Peter Romanus, who was martyred by the Soldan: Bonacius de Voltera: Peter de Colle: Alexander of Perugia: Leo Archbishop of Milan: Walter Bishop of Tremise: and Richard Bishop of Alexandria, doctor of diuinity: Charles Dendono of Manselme: Iohn of Rauerie: Torcello of Puppio, Bartholomew of S. Giminian: Peter Petinari: and of the blessed Thomas Vntius of Tullinium, who by miracles & prophesie was very famous: All the aforesayd haue bin famous in sanctity of life, and in great reputation of vertues and miracles.

The names of many holy women of this Order.

S. Rosa of Viterbium: sainte Margarit of Cortone: sainte Aemiliana of Florence: sainte Clare of Mont-faucon, in whose hart after her death was found a crucifix, with all the mysteries of the passion: and many other Ladies, among whom is placed an Empresse: which women were very venerable and worthy of perpetuall memory. Which, if they haue not obtayned heere below among earthly people, they enioy it with far greater glory among the Angels & SS. in the celestially kingdome; by which fruit it appeareth that this holy confraternity of Penitents, instituted by the holy Father S. Francis, was assisted by the holy Ghost, to the end that Christians of free estate, married persons, and widows that cannot support the burden of Religion, may in their houses produce fruites worthy of penance, to the saluation of their soules and for the loue of IESVS CHRIST.

The end of the ninth booke.

THE



THE TENTH BOOKE
 OF THE CHRONICLES
 OF THE FRIER MINORS
 OF THE SFRAPHICALL FATHER S. FRANCIS.

WHERIN ARE RECORDED MANY
 notable thinges happened in the first beginning of
 the said Order.

An aduertisment of the first Translatour vnto the Reader.



Euout reader, you must not meruayle that in
 this booke we haue not followed the order
 of the author: for we haue thus done for a
 better disposition of this worck, and for your
 greater satisfaction, placing the chapters that
 concerne the life of the holy Father S. Fran-
 cis in their place, which I suppose the author
 omitted, because wanting knowledge of
 them at first, he would not afterward take
 the paine to change the methode which he
 had with so much labour begun, though we,
 for the glory of God only and your contentment, haue willingly vnder-
 taken the same. Know then, that,

*The first and second chapter are placed after the last chap. of the second booke.
 The 3. chap. after the 27. of the second booke. The 4. chap. after the
 30. of the second booke. The 5. chap. after the last of the
 booke. And the 6. chap. after the 30. of the
 first booke.*

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of

Of what arrived to Two Religious of S. Francis, With a Tyrant Whome they converted to penitence.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

WHen first S. Francis with the Benediction of God and his own sent his first disciples to preach penance over the world, to the end they might communicate vnto men the fruites of their good life, and by their example and the edification of their pious workes, renew the church of God, being in forraine contries among barbarous nations, they that saw the, with admiration sayd, what rarity is this? we haue neuer seene men thus attyred, bare-footed, lining so austerely, and so different from all other Religious, that they rather seeme wild men, then other. Neuertheles when they entred into any particuler place or house, they would say: God giue you peace: and would admonish the inhabitants to feare and loue God, as the Creatour of heauen and earth, and exhort them to labour alwayes in the obseruation of his holy commandements: to doe penance, and to amend their liues. And albeit few were found to whome these exhortations were gratefull, yet they mett with curious persons that made so many demaundes, as they were much troubled to giue them answere: As whence they were, whence they came? Of what Order they were? how and wherof they liued? who was their cheefe? And in fine, by what authority they preached? Whereto with patience and humility thy answered that they were Religious of penance, of our Ladyes of Angels art Assisium: that their principall head and directour was Brother Francis: and that by ordinance and commandement of the Pope they preached penance. Others seeing them so disguised, and hearing them speake with such simplicity, reputed them fooles, coufening or deluding companions, and would not admitt them into their houses, for feare thy would robbe them: whence it often arrived that none hauing compulsion to harbour them, they slept in the church porches or vnder pent-houles: & so perseuering, by their example of pouerty and humility, they att length moued the most obdurate harts to compulsion and deuotion, & left many places edified in the feare of God. And therefore the reputation of their vertues encreasing, they daily produced singuler fruites of good example, among which this is one which we now intend to relate.

It happened one time that two new Religious, but true children of the holy Father saint Francis, traueilling through a contry which they neither knew, nor they knowne to any, they came to a castell that was a refuge to certaine theues, of whome was capitaine a noble man of

of great family, but of most vicious life: whither being come, weary, feeble, and halfe starued with hungar and cold, not able to passe farther, they there stayed, without dreaming what danger might there befall them, and sent to pray this tyrant, to entertayne, lodge, and refresh them that night, for the loue of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. This noble man by diuine inspiration, willingly receaued them into his house, and commanded incontinently a good fire to be made them, then caused them to eat with his people. At which time, one of the Religious that was a Priest, and had a speciall grace in preaching well, perceauing that att this table there was no speech but of robbing, killing and pilling, each one vaunting of his villanies, and glorying in his murders and thefes committed, the good seruant of God resolued, after supper to make them an exhortation in the behalfe of our Saviour IESVS CHRIST, with the greatest seruour he could procure. And so, grace being sayd, vnable any longer to retaine his zealous spirit, he addrested himselfe to the tyrant and sayd: Hauing receaued of you such a charity for the loue of God, we should proue too ingratefull if we did not beseech the diuine maiesty to reward you for vs, and did not endeauour to requite you by some documents conformable to our pouerty, that may benifitt your soules and your peoples, whome I beseech you heere to assemble together, we desiring to giue to you all, a spirituall refection for the corporal which you haue giuen vs. This noble man hauing conuocated all his people, and they hauing settled themselues to heare the sermon, the Religious began with exceeding seruour to discourse of the glory of Paradise, in these termes: My beloued Brethren in CHRIST IESVS, if the eternall felicities, for which God hath created vs, were knowne vnto vs, and that we did often well consider them, what paine would we not undertake to serue him, and neuer to offend him, for feare to loose that ioy and glory without end, for so base a trifle as the world? that sweet society of the Angels? that life and security of the blessed? that glorious satiety of the elect? that supreme light without night and darcknes? that perpetuall peace and amity without any feare or perturbation? and all the happines that we can desire, free and secure from all disaster, with that diuine fountaine of the presence and glorious communication of the eternall God? And sith that man (so blinded and miserable) for so base and loathsome a thing, so short and of so slender value as is sinne, will loose such innumerable and infinite felicities: he shall deseruedly goe into hell, there to endure eternall hungar, thirst, cold, all kind of torment, and perpetuall affliction in the company of cruell deuils, serpents and dragons, where is a continuall death without end, and without hope of life,

with

with palpable darcknes. And finally greater miseries then we can imagine, considering that there is nothing but howlinges, lamentations, delpaires and eternall torments, and alleuill voyd of all good, wherin to my brethren you haue merited to be throwne and imprisoned, for the sinnes which you haue perpetrated so precipitiously without any apprehension of the diuine iustice, at least according to the inference of your discouries, which haue testified vnto me your vicious and detestable life, you therby giuing demonstration that you neither feare God, nor esteeme of his commandements, nor regard the doing of any good work. Therefore my beloued brethren, doe I admonish you in the behalfe of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, who for you was fastened on the hard wood of the crosse, and pardoned the theefe, to giue vs confidence of his mercy: and doe counsaile you by the reuerence of the omnipotence of the Creatour of althings, not to make shipwrack and exchaung of the celestially and eternall richesse, for the brieue pleasure of sinnes, which as you experience, vanish as a shadow. Retourne then with great promptitude vnto God, to the end he thrust you not into hell, denying you time and space to doe penance: so many yea es hauing fleeted away wherein he hath so patiently expected you, though you haue giuen no signe of regarding it. This Religious vttered these things and much more with such a zeale, that they peared the hart of the Tyrant, who being touched by the holy Ghost, and already stricken with contrition, fell to the ground together with all his people, bitterly lamenting their sinnes. They shewed signes of penitence, and after many teares the tyrant with great instapcie required the Religious to sett them in the way to saue their soules, sith God had sent him hither for their saluation. And the Religious aduised them to make a generall confession of all their sinnes: Which being with notable deuotion and contrition performed, he sayd: It is now necessary, that for penance for your sinnes which are enormous and in nomber infinite, you goe in pilgrimage to vifit the holy places, and that you mortifie your flesh by fastes, watchings and prayers, giuing many almofes and performing other woikes of piety. But you must begin with satisfaction, restoring what you iniustly detain. Wherto he answered: Father, I am content to satisfie whatsoeuer I am bound vnto. But because I was neuer out of this contrie, nor can write, nor read, nor not the Pater noster, nor can fast, I beseech you for the loue of God to giue me some other penance that I may be able to performe. The Religious replied: I will for the loue of God doe penance and pray vnto I E-SVS CHRIST for you, that your soule be not lost. I will not for the present giue you other penance then for mortification, your selfe to bring vs hither a litle straw wheron to repose our selues. The tyrant becoming a lambe presently brought straw for the Religious to rest on, and pre-

prepared their place himfelfe: Then confidering with himfelfe the dif-
 courfe that the Religious had made him, and how Speedily he had con-
 uerted him to penitence, he reputed him a faint, and refolued to watch
 him all that night to fee what he would doe. Now the Religious att his
 houre layd himfelfe to repofe, and when he thought they all fleep, he
 arofe & went out of the houle, to doe penance for the penitent as he had
 promifed him. Lifting then his handes to heauen, he with many teares
 demâded pardon of almighty God for the finner, & praying with exceed-
 ing feruour, his body was eleuated frō the earth the hight of a tour, &
 in that manner, bitterly bewayled the foule of that noble man, begging
 pardon of IESVS CHRIST for his offences in fuch fort and with a cha-
 rity fo paffionate, that he merited to be heard, as appeareth by what
 enlueth: for the penitent hauing feene and heard all this, nor without
 exceeding terrour, contrition and abundance of teares, accompanied
 with confolation, perceauing with what feruour the feruant of God
 offered his prayers to the diuine Maiety for the faluation of his foule:
 very early in the morning he fell att the feet of the Religious, praying
 him with great compunction to fetle him in the direct way of faluation,
 he being ready to execute whatfoeuer he fhould command him. The Re-
 ligious hauing confailed him to fell all he had, he did his vtmoft to ma-
 ke reftitution where he was obliged, and according to Euangelicall coun-
 faile gaue the reft to the poore: then offered himfelfe to God becoming a
 Frere Minor, where he perfeuered in vertues and piously ended his life:
 all his people were alfo conuerted and did penance. So the holy simpli-
 city of this Religious produced a merueillous fruit, not preaching of
 high and fubtill matters, nor with elegant wordes, but only of the pai-
 nies of hell and glory of Paradife; as he had bin instructed by the holy
 Father faint Francis.

*The 8. and 9. chapters are put after the 72. chap. of the firft booke, the 10.
 chap. after the 5. of the fecond booke, and the eleuenth chap. after the
 74. of the fecond booke.*

Notable humility of a Preacher of S. Francis his Order.

THE XII. CHAPTER.

AN English Frere Minor and Doctour of diuinity, preaching in
 the Monastery of S. Damian, where S. Clare was Abbefse in the
 prefence of holy Br. Giles, he as a great freind of humility would
 make prooffe thereof in this Preacher, and fo in the middest of his fer-
 mon, he willed him to be filent becaufe himfelfe would preach, and the

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diuine incontinently held his peace, and Brother Giles with exceeding seruour of spiritt and to the great amazement and edification of the hearers vttered matters of great sublimity and eminency touching almighty God: then tounring towards the Diuine, he willed him to proceed in his sermon: which S. Clare perceauing, she was exceeding ioyfull & sayd: This day is accomplished one of the desires of S. Francis, who would often say: I desire that my Religious be so humble, as that a Doctour in diuinity going into the pulpitt, if a simple lay Brother make a morion to preach, the Doctour shall giue him place. I tell you truly my Brethren; this Preacher hath more edified me, then if he had rayled one from death.

The 13. chapter is after the 54. of the first booke, the 14. chap. is after the last of the second booke.

Of a very terrible accident vnto a Nouice, cloathed by S. Antony of Padua.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

THere was a worldly man whose profession was to follow the warres, in which practise he did much mischief: this mā induced by the deuill came to the blessed Father S. Antony of Padua, then Guardian of the Monastery of Limoges, and besought him to giue him the habit of the Frere Minors, affirming a desire to serue God therein. The Sainct as zealous of the saluation of soules, after diuers and seuerall conferences with him, and alwayes finding him firme in his pretended holy purpose, heard his confession: then hauing piously admonished him to doe penance for his sinnes he gaue him the habitt, and had a particular care of his deportements: but this lewd wretch hauing promised the deuill to serue him with fidelity in whatsoeuer vocation he should take vpon him, and neuer to discover his intention to any person, did very strongly obserue this conuention; and in his generall confession, vsing his vtmost dissimulation did conceale this secrett of the deuills from saint Antony, and indeed did alwayes in his hart excogitate matters directly opposite to his saluation, as his master the deuill had taught him. So that it is easy to iudge that God had not drawne him to Religion: but rather some discontentment, in that his worldly affaires succeeded not as he wished, and hearing saint Antony preach, he became Religious, yet omitted not to hope and expect some benefit from the deuill. Saint Antony as a faithfull seruant of God, with exceeding seruour made him many remonstrances, to enduce him to renounce the world with all his hart, to resist and chastice his flesh, to shunne the deuill, and to withstand all his temptations; and to this effect gaue him meanes to performe a sharp and rigorous penance for his

enormous finnes. But this Nouice in all such vertuous and pious actions did dissemble, as hauing no affectiō therunto. This wretched Nouice the goeing one day out of his cell, which was on a litle hill separated from the others, saw a very faire horse well harnised, with a compleat mour vpon him and a cloke bagge on him behinde: which att first sight and apprehension amazed him; but after hauing without feare beheld the horse, he had a desire to see what was in the cloke bagge, and to that end layd hold on the horse by the raines and drew him a side, where hauing searched the sayd cloake bagge, he found stoare of mony and a faire sute of apparell, so that hauing found a horse, apparell, armour and mony, he reputed himselfe most happily furnished withall that he desired: whervpon shaking off his Frere Minors habitt, & putting on his worldly attyre, and armour of a soldier, he mounted on horseback, and so secretly rode away that none perceaued him. The same day he made such speed that he arriued att Bourges in Berry, where alighting late att an Inne, the houre of soupper being come, he sett himselfe att table, and was attended by the daughter of the Host, who so well pleased his fancy that he demanded her of her Father in Mariage, and to induce his consent shewed him the mony he had in his cloackbag. The Host att the sight of so much mony was tempted with avarice, graunted his daughter to be his wife, and left them to complement together. The deuill then presently leauing the figure of a horse and hauing putt on the shape of a man, came about midnight and knocked att the dore of that Inne, where being entred, drew the master of the house a side to speake with him, feining himselfe iealous of his honour, and sayd: Syr, is it not true that you haue consented to mary your daughter to a stranger, it is sayd the host, the deuill replied: know then that he whome you haue accepted for your sonne in law is a Religious man, who as alewd fellow hath deluded you and rauished your daughter. Therefore, sith there is no other remedy, follow my counsaile: goe whiles it is night he sleeping in his bed, but so warily that he may not heare you, and you shall find his head bare, shauen with a croune in manner of a Religious: so that it prouing infallible what I tell you, cutt his throat, and take his mony withall that he hath, wherewith you shall much better mary your daughter. Besides, there is no cause of feare, for this fellow is not knowne in these quarters nor in any part of France: This discourse putt the host into an extreme anguish; but being at length overcome by the passion of choller, and encouraged by the deuill, he resolved to murder his new sonne in law, if he found it true which his pretended friend had told him, whom he prayed to stay till he had effected his counsaile, to assist him to bury the body, promising him a share of the mony whereto the deuill accorded. so this Host wēt so dextrously into the chāber of the

nouice, that he found him profoundly sleeping, and halfe naked, and perceauing the religious croune conformable to what was told him, he would expect no farther prooffe, but esteeming himfelfe dishonoured and deceaued, drew out his dagger and cutt his throat: which done, retourning to the place where he left his pretended friend that had thus counsailed him, he could not find him in all the house, then going to seaze on the cloak bagge, the armour, and apparell of the dead man, he could find nothing, nor the horse in the stable: and therefore presently suspected it to be a diabolicall illusion, and with the most secrefie he could, buried the body, then went and made his confelion to S. Antony who then preached in the same towne of Bourges, who a litle after publickly diuulged the same, to make appeare how dangerous it is to run out of the true way of the feare of God, who permitteth them that wilbe faithfull to the deuill and perseuer in their sinnes to the end (thinking to deceaue his diuine Maiefty) to end their dayes most miserably.

The 16. chap. is after the last of the first booke, the 17. and 18. are after last chap. of the second booke.

Of the humility and deuotion of Brother James.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

Brother James a gentleman and much honoured in the world, becomming a Frere Minor, was so deuout and spirituall, that in his prayer he was often rapt in extasie, wherein he was very frequently visited of God. He perceauing what graces our Lord had endued him with all in prayer, entreated his Guardian, the better to exercise himfelfe in this grace, that he would please to dispense with him for affaires of the kitchen and other offices, wherein, being a lay Brother, he was in that Couent employed, which was graunted him, to the end he might with more repole and liberty apply himfelfe to contemplation. Br. James being thus freed from the kitchen, and other offices of the house, lost all the graces which almighty God had giuen him in prayer. Which hauing experienced, he with abondance of teares besought his Guardian to retourne him to his former employments: wherein our lord againe restored him his grace. He thenceforward so profited in prayer ioyned with humility, that on Christmas day (to communicate timely and to continue all the morning in the Church to heare masse and the diuine seruice) he prepared the dinner for the Religious in the night, and left it ouer the fire. Now the Guardian seeing him continue to long
time

time in prayer & seruing att masse, went admiring to the kitchen to see if he had made any preparation for dinner. But he found the pots ouertourned and broaken and saw that the cates had eaten the meat: then presently going to Brother Iames, he willed him to hasten into the kitchen. Which he did, and finding the pots broken, the pottage spilt, the meat deuoured, and euery thing ouerthrowne, he was exceedingly grieved. Neuertheles falling on both his knees, he with abondance of teares besought the omnipotent bounty, to assit in this his affliction. The sequell was admirable: for his prayer being ended, the pots were reioyned and filled againe with pottage and meat like vnto that which he had prepared, as if it neuer had bin att all touched. Wherein almighty God would make appeare to this Religious, how much humility and prayer ioyned together are gratefull vnto him.

The 20. chap. is after the last of the second booke.

Of a Guardian that had litle charity, and how almighty God did chastise him.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

THer was a pious lay Religious that endured extreme torments in his feet by meanes of the gout that exceedingly afflicted him: but in the wintertime more then else, and yet did he not omitt to labour in the garden in the coldest season of the yeare. Notwithstanding his indiscreet Guardian seeing him att night by the fire to annoynt his feet with an oyntment (though the rigorous cold was cause sufficient without any other infirmity, to warme himselfe) he commanded him from the fire, and not to burne so much wood. Wherto the poore Religious answered, that he had no other meane to ease the extreme torments he endured procured him by the gout, then to warme his feet and to annoynt them with that oyntment, which was giuen him for very remedious therunto, & besought him for the loue of God and S. Francis not to take it ill. But the Guardian would not heare him: so that the Religious retyred doubly afflicted vnto his cell, beseeching God to assit and ayd him with his grace. But the omnipotent did not long deferre to doe vengeance: For he sent the Guardian the same torments which the poore Religious endured, wherein finding no other remedy then to warme him by a great fire, he began to acknowledge his litle charity and confessed his fault, saying: My God haue pity on me if thou please, and assit me with thy mercy, for I acknowledge my desert of this torment, sith I haue

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bin cruell towards my simple Brother, depriuing him of his assured remedy in his necessity. And sending for him, he layd: Brother, warme your selfe both day and night according to the need you haue. For I am assured the fire is a great helpe and ease vnto your torments. This Guardian hauing done penance was in few dayes after cured by meanes of this charity.

The 22. and 23. chap. are after the last of the second booke.

Of the subtilty which two seuerall times the deuill vsed to reduce the Frere Minors from the strictnes of their poeerty.

THE XXIV. CHAPTER.

THe Frere Minors of those primitiue dayes liued att Mont Aluerne in the same spirituall tranquillity and pouerty as S. Francis had instituted and instructed them. The deuill vnable to support such a vertue of prayer, abstinence and austeritie of life, nor able to disquiett the Religious, by desires of substance and temporal affaires, inuented a new subtilty to induce them to remitt and lessen the austeritie and perfection of the spirituall life wherein they perseuered, which was thus: There was in those partes a very rich gentleman, that had no deuotion to the Frere Minors, nor euer gaue them any almose. The deuill taking on him humane shape became his seruant and so diligently serued him, that he shortly committed vnto him the gouernment of his house and the absolute disposition and management of his affaires, following his counsaile in all his businesse. Now as they one day discoursed together, the deuill began to prayse the Frere Minors of Mont Aluerne, saying that they were SS. and that whosoever were charitable in almose towards them did much merit with almighty God. Then did he alleadg vnto him so many pregnant reasons, that he wrought the gentleman to be so deuout and affected to those Religious, as that he almost euery day sent them for almose, bread, flesh, fish, fruit, and all this in such abondance, that the Religious who formerly liued austerely began to liue bountifully & royally with this almose procured them by the deuill. Which being perceived by certaine good ancient Religious, who acknowledged the spiritual detriment that arriued vnto them, one of them began to consider on some meanes to remedy the same, & therefore he recommended himselfe to God and besought him, not to permit his seruants to fall into such relaxation in their manner of life. And so being touched with the spirit of God he wēt with his cōpanion to the houle of this gentlemā their benefactour, with whome hauing discoursed of diuers matters touching almighty God, he demaunded of him who had induced him to such deuotion

tion towards them as to bestow on them such liberall almose, considering that a litle before he was nothing charitable towards them at all. Whereto the gentleman answered that among infinite seruices which one of his seruants had don & still continued, he reputed this the principall, that he had wrought him to be affected vnto them for the benefit of his soule. And had such a special care to put him in minde to send them some bountifull almose, that there was neuer day wherein he failed to procure the performace therof. This Father admiring the exceeding charity of this seruant, prayed the gentleman that he might see him: whome causing diuers times to be called, there was no meanes to make him appeare before this holy Religious. But being att lēgh thereunto enforced, as soone as this good Religious saw him he knew who he was. And he seeing himselfe discovered, vanished, and was neuer after seene in that place. The Religious then hauing discovered the subtilty of the deuill, and procured the gentlemans promise to send no more almose to the monastery, he reformed it, and restored it to their former abstinence and rigour of spiritual life.

The deuill inuented another delusion in Portugall in the Couent of Alenquer, to disturbe & disquiett the Religious of that place. For hauing assumed the humane shape of an excellent Phisicion, Surgion, or Apothicary, he went to the Couēt to demaūd the habit of a Fiere Minor, which he did with great instance and feyned deuotion, pretending to serue God therein. Hauing receiued the habitt, and being Nouice, he dressed, alsisted and attended the sick Religious with so extraordinary a charity & propititude, and therein was so diligent, and also in assisting att diuine seruice and prayer, where he appeared so deuout and in althings fained himselfe so humble, that the Religious were exceedingly pleased in him, in whome thy perceaued nothing deseruing admonition, but that he alwayes made some excuse or euasion to shunne the sacred communion with the other Nouices, lay Brothers and other Religious that were not Priestes, so that he neuer communicated all the time of his being there. This fained Religious began of himselfe to publish vnto seculer parsons his qualities and sciences. So that there was alwayes some one att the Couent dore that demaunded certaine water, receites or medicines for diuers infirmities, he hauing already the fame of an excellent Phisician. Wherwith the Religious were so disturbed that the Guardian who was one of the disciples of Saint Francis, vpon this inquietude gaue himselfe to prayer, to know the will of God in this behalfe: where it was reuealed vnto him, that the Phisician was a deuill, and had putt himselfe among them to disturbe them; wherupon he tooke the habitt frō that nouice and consequently expelled the deuill. So that the Couent returned to its former repose and poverty, which

which had already began to grow to ruine by the great quantity of almose brought thither by meanes of the Philicion, to whome infinite people from all partes did resort.

How our Sauour Iesus Christ, by the merittes of S. Francis, conferred certaine Religious in the Order.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

A Yong Religious being professed was so tempted by the deuill, that he would needes leaue the habitt: yet would he not doe it without the consent of saint Francis, of whom he demanded leaue to depart. But he denied him in these wordes: Brother, sith our lord by his piety hath deliuered you from the perils and miseries of the world, you may by no meanes retourne againe therto. This Religious being yet still tempted to leaue the Order, went to the Pope to gett dispensation of his Holinesse. But there also finding denyall, he of him selfe cast off the habitt, then wandring alone in the helde he met a man naked hauing such woundes as our Redeemer IESVS CHRIST receaued for vs in his feet, handes and side, who shewed him his woundes: whereatt the yong man being vtterly amazed, asked him who he was & how he had receaued those woundes so like to those of our Lord IESVS CHRIST? Wherto our Sauour answered: It is my selfe that haue bin thus wounded for thee, and for mankind, and yet thou wilt abandon me to follow the world, behould these woundes which I haue endured for thee. And at all times that the deuill shal tept thee causing thee to endure some contradiction against thy desire and tast, fix thine eyes on these woundes and thou shalt find consolation. Which sayd he incontinently vanished, and the yong man changing his purpose retourned to S. Francis, to-whome heacknowledgeled his fault, and hauing obtained pardon, he recounted to all the Religious what he had seene, and piously perseuered in the Order to the end.

An other Religious was tempted with desire to visite his kinred, and leaue being refused him by the Prouinciall, he sayd to himselfe: I will goe, and they shall see who can force me to retourne: and presently without further licence departed. The Religious followed him far, most instantly praying him to retourne; But reiecting their prayers ad admonitions and proceeding in his iorney, he was a litle after surprised with such an extreme desire of sleepe, that he could not possibly resist it, and so falling to the ground he fell a sleep. And presently he had this vision: S. Francis (who then liued and was far distant from those quarters) appeared vnto him, saying: how hast thou dared to misprise the yoke of obedience

obedience retourne incontinently to the Couent whence thou art fled. And because he would not goe, S. Francis stroake him soundly with a wand which he had in his hand, so that awaking he still felt the paine of the blowes received; whervpon he speedily returned to his Couent, where his Brethren hauing very charitably receaued him, he related vnto him how S. Francis had enforced him to retourne.

Sometime after a yong gentleman of very delicat constitution being admitted into the Order of the Frere Minors, began (by diabolicall temptation) to haue his habitt in such horror, that he seemed to carry on him a most base and abominable burden. This irksomnes of religion encreasing in him, he resolved to abandon it and to retourne to the world. Now his Master of the Nouiciat had taught him, that as often as he past before the altare of the most sacred sacrament, he should vncover his head, bend his knees, & crosing his armes, lowly encline towards the ground. Which hauing done the same morning that he had purposed to depart, he was as it were constrained to kneele before the altare, and at the instant had this merueillous vision: He saw an infinite multitude of Religious that passed two and two in procesion before the altare, cloathed in most rich and gorgeous attire, hauing their face, and handes, and whatsoeuer exteriorly appeared of their bodies more glittering then the sunne, with a countenance and gesture extremely ioyfull, and more excessiue then can be imagined, who did sing most melodiously. In the fore-front marched two Religious more notable then the others, so gloriously attired that they astonished the beholders. Towards the end of this procesion came a Religious in habitt of particuler glory, who was honoured by the others as one newly entertayned into their companye. The nouice not knowing the signification of this procesion prayed the hind-most to tell him who they were, who turning towards him, sayd: We are your Brethren Minors that now come from Paradise, and asking them who were those two more glorious then the rest, they answered: they are the blessed Fathers S. Francis and S. Antony, and he who is almost the last, attyred in particuler glory, is a Religious who is now dead whome in this solemne triumph we conduct to paradise, because he hath courageously battayled against temptations, and perseuered in his holy purpose to the end. These beautifull and sumptuous habits which we weare, are giuen vs for recompence of the so rude asperity of the habitt which so patiently we woare in religion. God hath also endued vs with this glory for the humble penance which we haue supported, and for the holy obedience, chastity and pouerty which we haue with alacrity obserued to the end. And therefore my child make no difficulty to weare the sack cloth and habitt of our Religion, it being so profitable: in regard that if thou combatt courageously in the habitt of

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S.

S. Francis misprising the world, mortifying the flesh, and resisting the deuill for the loue of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, I know thou shalt haue fruition of this glory. Which sayd the vision disappeared, and the Nouice finding himselfe full of comfort and consolation in God, reiecting all the temptations, and resoluing thenceforward to esteeme al the rigours and contemptes of Religion as sportes and contentments, he therein liued and dyed very piously.

The 26 chapter is after the 85 chapter of the first booke.

The 27 chapter is after the 27 of the first booke.

The 28 chapter is after the 95 of the first booke.

The 29 chapter is after the 39 of the second booke.

The 30 chapter is after the 19 of the eight booke.

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The 33 chapter is after the 17 chapter of the second booke.

The 34 chapter is after the 33 of the second booke.

*How a Lawyer by occasion of a vaine word entred into the Religion of
saint Francis.*

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

BRother Iohn Parent who was the first Minister Generall after S. Francis, entred into that Order in the time of the sayd saint. Liuing in the world, he was a Doctour of law and Iudge de Ciuitate Castellana of the Prouince of Rome whence he was natieue. Being one euening att a window of his house and attentiuely beholding the trouble a swineheard had to make his hogges enter into a stable, he heard a companion of the swineheards say vnto him: If thou wilt make them enter, say these wordes: Hogges, hogges enter ye into the stable as Lawyers and Iudges enter into hell. Which the swineheard hauing sayd, the hogges without any noyse incontinently hastened into the stable, and were no more troublesome to their guide. The Iudge perceauing this, touched with an extreme feare of the iustice of God, incontinently reiected his office, and became a Frere Minor, and one of his sonnes, with him, and spent his life most exemplarly in that Order, in prayers & teares, and so austere in penance, that being Minister Generall, he visited all the Order barefoot: so did he gather lo much profit touching the good of his soule, euen of a vaine word.

of

Of an admirable vision that happened in the Couent of saint Francis of Lisbonne.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

Many holy parsons florished in Spaine in the primatiue time of this Religion and especially in the Prouince of S. Iames of Galicia, albeit of their worckes and sanctity of life, particuler recordes are extât of very few, amōg whome is of one Br. Iohn that resided in the Couent of S. Francis att Lysbone within the prouince of Galicia, on whome our Lord bestowed many speciall graces, & particulerly this, that in principall feastes, att the Euenlonges, Matines, or in Masse, he alwayes cōmunicated vnto him some spirituall consolations. But one feast of S. Iohn Baptist, not hauing receaued the ordinary consolations from Almighty God, att any of those houres he was thereat exceedingly grieved, and therfore the Sixt houre being sayd, and the Masse ended, he remayned alone in the quire bitterly lamēting, for feare that he had offēded our Lord IESVS CHRIST, in that he knew not the reason why he was deprived of those ordinary graces, and in his hart, with sighes sobbes & teares he cryed vnto God: My God, why hast thou forsaken me? and thus perseuering till all the Religious were in the refectory, he still demaunded that ordinary spirituall almose of almighty God. And then did he heare a voice that sayd: Iohn arise, goe to the refectory, follow the cōmunalty, and thinck not thy selfe better then the others. Wheratt being vtterly confounded, enclining his head, he went vnto the others into the refectory, and sat downe att table: but alsoone as Grace was said, he sawe the heauens open, and an Angell discending thence, bringing a golden pen, a table napkin, and a knife: this Angell entring into the refectory, went directly vnto the Religious that did read, whose breast he opened with the knife, then dryed it with his napkin, and on his hart wrote in letters of gold, *Iohannes est nomen eius*; the same he did to all the Religious, till he came to one that had bin canon of the great church of the said citty, whome he would not touch, affirming that the night following he would abandon the Order, which indeed he did, neither would he touch the Reader of the Couent nor his companion, because in a feast of solēnity they had left the Couent to goe preach in the citty: but att lenght by the prayers of the sayd Iohn, he wrote the sayd wordes in their harts. And so after he had written in them all, he returned to him that did read, and shutt vp his hart, the like he did to all the other Religious, saying: *Confirmatum est nomen eius*, which was an exceeding consolation to this blessed Father.

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A note-

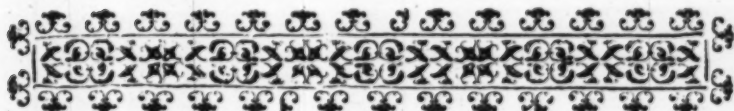
A notable miracle of the B. Sacrament, wrought in the Couent of S. Francis at Mans, a motiue and cause of the erection of a worthy confraternitie.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

THe Couent of the citty of Mans, is one of the most ample and ancient of the Order, there commonly resyding forty Religious or more, from the time that the blessed Electus, one of the companions of saint Francis there layd the foundation about the yeare 1215. A deuout and ample confraternity (perhaps the most ancient of Christendome) was erected, and is honorably continued in that Couent vpon this occasion: A venerable and very simple Religious celebrating masse, a spider of lothsome greatnes casually (or to speake more Christianly, by diuine prouidence) fell after consecration into the sacred chalice. The deuout Religious at first apprehension was much perplexed how to behaue himselfe in the holy communion (were it that the directions how to proceed in such accidents were not then recorded in the Missall Rubriques as they are now, or that he did not then reflect on them, for more ample manifestation of the glory of God) he finally resolved vpon that excellēt promise of our Lord: If they who beleue in me as they ought, drink any mortiferous poyson, they shall receaue no detrimēt thereby; & so cōming to the sacred communion of the precious bloud of our lord, he in one draught refected himselfe both with poyson and the medicament of death and of life, so that euen in this point might be accomplished that which the Church singeth att the resurrection of our Lord: *Mors & vita duello conflixere mirando*, and as here *Dux vita mortuus regnat viuus*, so then did he graunt that effect to this same precious bloud that it expelled the poyson, and without paine the venomous spider passed through the Priest a litle after, when the other Religious of the Couent and certaine deuout seculer persons there present, thought no otherwise of the Celebratour (hauing by his relation vnderstood what had happened) then those of Malto conceated of the biting of S. Paul by the viper. Almighty God here renuyng that ancient miracle, sauing that this appeareth greater, by the difference of an exteriour byting of a viper, and the interiour operation of a spider no lesse venomous. The people of Mans that were euer very religious, did by this miracle so augment their deuotion vnto the B. Sacrament of the Altare, that att the same time was erected a Confraternity of innumerable persons of all qualities, which is most deuoutly enterayned in that Couent, & hath bin since imitated in diuers other Citties and townes of the kingdome of

OF THE FRIER MINORS LIB. X. 747
of France, to the glory of God, the augmentation of his seruice, and
the benefit of Christian people

*The end of the first part of the Chronicles of the
Frere Minors.*



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